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**An evaluation of COPE'S communication strategy for the 2011 Municipal Election in the  
Northern Cape**

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**Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the**

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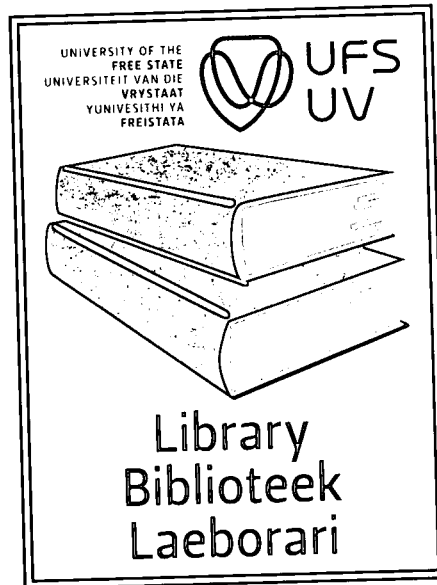
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**University of the Free State**

**Supervisor: Prof. J. de Wet**

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**APPENDICES 1 and 2 ABBREVIATIONS**

**APPENDIX 1: OBJECTIVES CALCULATIONS**

**APPENDIX 2: VD ANALYSIS DATA**

## CHAPTER ONE: ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

### 1.1 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The main purpose of this study was to evaluate a developed communication strategy for the Congress of the People's 2011 municipal elections campaign in the Northern Cape.

The research was initially conducted while in the employ of COPE. The development of the communication strategy was undertaken prior to the elections and its evaluation took place after Election Day, using data and experience gathered before, after and during the course of the campaign's implementation.

Currently, no detailed analysis of the political landscape in the Northern Cape, either past or present, exists in the public domain. This is problematic because in an environment of limited resources for campaigning, communication strategies need to be efficient and effective in order to strengthen democratic processes through increased competition.

As the party with the second highest proportion of the provincial vote in the 2009 National and Provincial Elections, COPE became the official opposition in the Northern Cape legislature. As a fledgling party with a damaged public image nationally, it faced an acid test in the 2011 Municipal elections. Limited finances and a barrage of negative media coverage resulting from public battles for the control of the party by its leaders, had left it in a precarious position (Phakati, 2011).

The party was formed largely by the members of the losing faction aligned to Thabo Mbeki in the wake of the ANC's leadership contest at the Polokwane conference in 2007 (Booyesen, 2009:85-92). This manifested on a provincial level and local level in the resignation of cabinet members and councillors as ANC leaders defected to COPE.

While many of these defectors lost the subsequent by-elections, some were able to get re-elected by mobilizing sufficient support within their communities. The party followed the same mass-party model of the ANC which places supposed tremendous importance on the

role of active branch membership. COPE therefore began the process of building branches on a voting district basis in order to proceed toward a legitimate election congress where branch delegates could democratically elect a legitimate party leadership (Wyngaard, 2010a).

In the 2009 national and provincial elections, COPE managed to accumulate up to 33% of the vote in a number of municipalities in the western half of the Northern Cape (refer to Chapter 3, section 3.6.2). Based on these results, as well as its presence in many communities where potential opposition voters outnumber those of the incumbent, a base existed to generate some gains in 2011. The party also had to compete with the ANC and Democratic Alliance (DA), with both of these parties being better funded and organized on a national level.

The Northern Cape presented a unique environment for which to develop a communication strategy for an election campaign. The vastness of the landscape and the near inaccessibility of areas where potential voters reside, are major obstacles to successful communication.

Because the strategy was tailored to a municipal election campaign, notable peculiarities were considered. Not the least of these was the emphasis on certain communication means, due to their suitability given the limited geographical scale of the individual local council campaigns. Traditional methods such as rallies, volunteer work, and proliferation of pamphlets amongst other techniques become more important to a communication strategy (Maarek, 1995:211).

While communication strategies may vary in their comprehensiveness, typically they include the campaign messages, techniques, schedule, budget, and campaign organization required for fulfilling this purpose (Gainer, n.d.; Green and Gerber, 2008; O'Day, n.d.).

The intention of this study, however, was not to provide something akin to a blueprint for the practical implementation of COPE's campaign in the Northern Cape. This is due to the limited academic value of making detailed recommendations for a campaign that is time-bound and of esoteric interest only to those who must implement it. Rather, the study

sought to analyze and evaluate politics and campaigning in the Northern Cape through the lens of a case study.

As a result, the recommendations for a communication strategy focused on who the campaign's target voters should have been, the messages the campaign should have conveyed to them, and the techniques that should have been used to reach voters. The finer details, therefore, of budgeting for the campaign and the scheduling of campaign activities were only considered in a general sense as part of the strategic recommendations.

Voters were studied primarily on the basis of political affiliation per geographic area through a voting district analysis, and in a broad socio-economic sense. Research into the attitudes and opinions of voters in each locality was beyond the limits of this study.

Similarly, in evaluating the success of the campaign against the objectives set for it in the communication strategy, the analysis does not extend to the nature of the individual campaign's run in each locality. Instead, the key factors influencing the provincial campaign effort as a collective were assessed.

The study concerns the field of political communication as the focus is primarily on developing a strategy for the effective delivery of appropriate campaign messages to targeted voters in order to reach political objectives.

The study makes use of the socio-political and systems traditions as scientific approaches to communication.

Campaigns are presented as operating within a system that must be affected to its advantage (Rensburg and Angelopulo, 1996:7-9; Steinberg, 1976:89-132). The socio-political landscape was studied to develop and evaluate the communication strategy.

## **1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES**

The research problem that pertained to this study was:

- *What factors found expression and influenced the extent to which COPE's 2011 Municipal Election campaign in the Northern Cape met the objectives set in the developed communication strategy?*

To this end, the research aimed to:

- Provide a theoretical and methodological basis for campaign planning
- Analyze the situation in the Northern Cape province
- Conduct a voting district analysis
- Set objectives and goals for the campaign
- Assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing COPE prior to the 2011 election
- Develop a communication strategy for COPE's 2011 Municipal Election Campaign in the Northern Cape
- Evaluate the implementation of the strategy and draw conclusions for future campaigns

### **1.3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

Both qualitative and quantitative research techniques were used to develop the communication strategy. The research began with a review of literature on campaign planning in order to provide a theoretical and methodological framework for the study.

For the *situation analysis* that followed, qualitative research techniques were primarily used. The regulations and legislation on local government elections were consulted to understand the rules and nature of this type of election. Demographic data and relevant literature on the Northern Cape were considered in order to provide the context of the election.

Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) reports on past voting outcomes in the province were studied alongside the available literature on past elections, to analyze trends in the political landscape of the Northern Cape. Literature on the viable parties contesting the

election, including academic and journalistic texts as well as documents produced by the parties, was studied to provide a background on each.

The media landscape in the province was assessed using the marketing profiles of each platform and knowledge from communication practitioners in the province. Anecdotal experience from being in the employ of COPE also proved to be useful.

Quantitative research techniques were used to set the campaign's goals and objectives, and to determine where the target voters of the campaign were to be located. A *voting district analysis* was used to analyze the balance of support for each of the viable contesting parties, down to the smallest geographical unit - the voting district.

The objectives for the campaign were set at a local and district council level in terms of the number of seats on municipal councils COPE should have aimed to win in the election. Objectives were calculated using the legislated formula for local government seat allocation along with data from past voting records. Factors such as the strategic importance of a given council and the strength of the party's grassroots campaign organization in each locality were also taken into account.

Goals that support the objectives were set at all levels - from voting district, to ward, to local and district council - and were measured in votes. Data generated by the *voting district analysis* was used for this purpose. The methodology used for both the *voting district analysis* and the setting of objectives and goals is explained in detail in Chapter two (refer to sections 2.4.2.1).

A SWOT analysis was made use of to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing COPE prior to the 2011 election. Field observations of by-elections in the run up to the election provided useful information on the campaigning habits of COPE's viable competitors.

The literature review, situation analysis, SWOT analysis and results of the objective calculations and voting district analysis, were then used to make recommendations for a communication strategy.

Recommendations were made on campaign messages and communication channels to be used to convey them. Voting districts that needed to be targeted by the campaign in order to meet objectives were also recommended.

The results of the election were then recorded against the campaign's objectives and the main factors in the campaign's implementation that influenced the outcome were discussed. Practical experience of having worked on the campaign, reports from grassroots activists, and literature and press clippings were the main sources used for this purpose.

Most of the research for this study was conducted while in the employ of COPE in a role of both participant and observer in the preparations for the 2011 election campaign. This proximity to the campaign came with both benefits and limitations.

A key benefit to the research was the generous access to all party meetings, politicians, structures, documents and processes required to understand the context of COPE in the Northern Cape in a comprehensive way. This understanding of the capacity of the party enhances the ability to set campaign objectives that realistically take into account its strengths and weaknesses.

A natural limitation on the research is that close proximity of this nature can also influence perceptions of the external environment, due to the partial investment in the cause of the party for which the strategy was developed.

A further limitation is that the amount of research that could reasonably be conducted had to be balanced with the time allocated to the obligations of preparing for the election that comes with being in the employ of the party.

#### **1.4 VALUE OF THE RESEARCH**

The research will contribute to what remains a paucity of literature on communication strategy in the context of South African election campaigns.

Given the study's practical aims, it may be used as an aid to inform decision-making in future election campaigns. In turn this may benefit the democratic ideal of increased

competition at the polls and contribute to strengthening accountability in the country. Because the methodology is adapted for campaign planning in South Africa, it may be duplicated for future campaigns.

For example, the *voting district analysis* provides a map of the balance of support in the Northern Cape province that can form the foundation of the targeting research for future campaigns in the province, as well as provide a tool for how to study and monitor voting patterns in South Africa as a whole.

The research provides insight into the campaign strategies of viable parties contesting elections in South Africa. A better understanding of the grassroots strategies of these parties may assist future studies in developing effective communication strategies for not only local elections, but national and provincial elections as well.

Furthermore, as a snapshot into the political dynamics of the Northern Cape in the run up to the 2011 municipal elections, the data generated in the study may be used to chart a way forward for opposition politics in the province or indeed to develop counter-strategies to this for the incumbent party.

## **1.5 KEY TERMINOLOGY**

**Demarcation** – The process by which the country is delimited geographically for the purpose of designating territories for provincial and municipal governance, as well as voting (Municipal Demarcation Board, 2011).

**Ward** – Geographic units comprising a municipal territory; demarcated for voting and governance purposes, with each ward represented by an elected ward councillor who is mandated by a majority of voters in a municipal election to represent the interests of ward residents on the municipality's council.

**Voting district** – The smallest demarcated unit, a varying number of voting districts comprise a ward depending on the geographic and population size of the ward. An appropriate building is designated in a voting district as a polling station where residents of the area may

cast their votes on Election Day. In municipal elections, voters may only cast a vote in the voting district where they are registered (IEC, 2011).

Voter's roll – A public document, maintained by the Independent Electoral Commission, that records all citizens who have registered as voters. If a person's name does not appear on a voter's roll then they will not be eligible to vote on Election Day.

Election Campaign – A series of planned, organized communication activities sustained over a limited period of time with specific objectives and limited resources to persuade targeted voters to vote for a cause, candidate, or party (Barker and Angelopulo, 2006:394).

Campaign objectives – The outcomes that a campaign aims to achieve; for the purposes of this study, campaign objectives are the number of seats a political party aims to win on a given municipal council in the 2011 Municipal Elections (refer to Chapter 2, section 2.4.2.2).

Vote goal – The estimated votes an election campaign aims to achieve in a particular demarcated area in order to reach to a campaign objective. Numerous methodologies may be used to calculate an estimated vote goal (refer to Chapter 2, section 2.4.2.2).

Turnout – The number or proportion of registered voters in a particular demarcated area who actually cast a vote on Election Day.

Base vote – The estimated minimum number or proportion of voters in a demarcated area who are likely to cast a vote for a particular political party on Election Day (Shaw, 2010:393).

Swing vote – The number or proportion of voters in a particular demarcated area who are less partisan and likely to be open to campaign's persuasion to vote for a particular political party (Shaw, 2010:394).

Voting district analysis – A method of analysis that uses a sample of past election results to calculate a range of factors including predicted turnout for future elections, base votes and swing votes, down to the unit of a voting district (refer to Chapter 2, section 2.4.2.1).

Targeting – The process of determining, on a geographic or demographic basis, how a campaign’s resources of time, money and people will be spent in order to meet the campaign objectives and vote goals (refer to Chapter 2, section 2.4.2.2).

Messaging – The core points that a campaign aims to communicate to its target voters in order to persuade them to vote for a political party or candidate in an election.

Techniques – The methods a campaign employs to contact the target voter with the message as part of the communication strategy.

Tactics – The rules that guide how a campaign will implement its communication strategy.

## **1.6 CHAPTER OUTLINE**

Chapter two provides a theoretical and methodological framework for campaign planning. Literature on campaign planning is discussed and the methods adapted for use in this study are described in detail. Election campaigns are defined and discussed in terms of systems theory. The phases of campaign planning are outlined and the aspects of a communication strategy are discussed.

In Chapter three, the situation is analyzed by focusing on major factors that influence the development of a communication strategy: the type of election, the province as a context for the election, the media landscape, the viable contesting parties and past election results in the Northern Cape.

In chapter four, the objectives and goals of the campaign are set for each local council and district council with the necessary motivation provided.

Chapter five presents an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that faced the COPE campaign, with a specific focus on their implications for the party’s communication strategy for the 2011 election in the Northern Cape.

Recommendations are made for the communication strategy in terms of who the target voters of the campaign should be, what messages they should be targeted with, and what techniques should be used to reach them.

In Chapter six, the implementation of the communication strategy is evaluated in terms of COPE's ability to have achieved the objectives set for the campaign. The main factors influencing this outcome are discussed using information gathered during the course of the campaign. The findings of the study are summarized, conclusions are drawn and recommendations for future campaigns are made.

The full range of data generated by the setting of objectives and the *voting district analysis* are presented in Appendices 1 and 2 respectively.

## 2. A THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR CAMPAIGN PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a theoretical and methodological framework for election campaign planning. The theory that is fundamental to this type of planning is discussed and methodology used for this study is outlined on the premise that it is often “necessary to adapt ‘ideal’ practices to the complex requirements of the various systems which the planner affects and is affected by” (Rensburg and Angelopulo, 1996:9).

### 2.2 DEFINING THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

An election campaign aims to contact the voter, which is done by means of “organized communication activities involving mass media and often complemented by interpersonal support” (Rogers and Storey, 1987, cited in Rensburg and Angelopulo, 1996:11).

J. Brian O’Day of the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs describes a good election campaign as one that “targets voters with a persuasive message and a reasonable plan to contact those voters” (n.d.:6). The process of *targeting* voters for a campaign is discussed in detail later in the chapter (refer to section 2.4.2.2).

There are three primary resources that are fundamental to any election campaign: time, money and people. All three of these resources can be regarded as limited and a campaign must make strategic choices to utilize them both effectively and efficiently (Steinberg, 1976:25).

While a specific campaign may have a set *time* period during which organized communication activities take place, the trend in politics is toward a “permanent campaign”

driven by the need to constantly maintain a presence and promote the image and policies of a party regardless of the date on which the next election is due to occur (Lilleker, 2006:51).

Permanent campaigning is closely linked to the increasing professionalization and, what some have called, the “Americanization” of political communication and the proliferation of political consultants, especially in developed democracies, where skills and an industry for this purpose have been established (Lilleker, 2006; Plasser, 2000). In other words, the more a political party can afford to keep valuable people on its staff full-time, the greater its ability to remain in a state of campaigning.

Nevertheless, as Election Day approaches and the time to influence voter decisions becomes increasingly limited, choices of what organized communication activities to utilize for maximum impact must take into account the important resource of time.

*Money*, of course, refers to the campaign’s financial backing. This may come either from a political party’s coffers, a candidate’s personal savings, donors, fundraising activities or the state, should such legislation exist. The extent of regulation on the funding of parties may vary depending on the country (refer to Chapter 3, section 3.2.6 for a South African context).

Money affects every aspect of a campaign’s implementation, including the ability to sustain a complement of full-time staff and volunteers; purchase advertising and campaign materials; and to make logistical arrangements for communication activities.

*People*, as a resource, refers to the human resources of the campaign organization and comprises paid professional staff and a volunteer base. Professional staffers are generally responsible for planning and running various aspects of the campaign that require skill and expertise. Volunteers may be responsible for canvassing; dropping flyers at voters’ homes, hanging posters; and many other basic activities depending on the type of campaign being run.

Arguably, the closer a campaign can come to an appropriate number of professional staff to suit its ends as is affordable, the better each of its aspects will be managed. While a volunteer base, in theory, should not cost the campaign any money, the context of the

campaign may require means to sustain volunteers depending on socio-economic conditions. Decisions must be made as to what communication activities best complement the volunteer base a campaign has been able to acquire and manage.

### **2.3 THE UNIQUENESS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN**

A professional approach to election campaigning is based on marketing principles and techniques, in some ways similar to commercial marketing and in some ways unique.

There are three major similarities: parties or candidates, like companies, must develop a “differential advantage” or compelling reason to choose them over their competitors; the citizen, like the consumer, is placed in the role of decision-maker; and the channels of communication used to persuade (mass media and personal contact) are virtually the same (Mauser, 1983:6-11).

There are also distinct differences that account for the originality of political marketing. First, while commercial marketing “increases the symbolic or practical value of a product”, political marketing “defines the politician’s objectives and platforms to influence the way citizen’s respond”. Second, much of the data available to commercial marketers, such as sale statistics, far supersedes the reliability of data available in political marketing, such as public opinion polls (Maarek, 1995:25-27).

Election campaigns should be based on a sound planning process. Failure to plan for a campaign can lead to disaster on many fronts such as an unrealistic budget, conflicting schedules for campaign activities and the mistiming of campaign messages.

### **2.4 PLANNING FOR ELECTION CAMPAIGNS**

In short, the practice of planning for an election campaign involves “defining the overall political landscape, the strategy and resources, required to get to Election Day” (O’Day, n.d.:6). This outcome should be based on sound formative research (refer to section 2.4.2.1).

Campaign planning encompasses both systematic and creative elements. The systematic elements may include determining the number of households that need to be contacted; the analysis of past election results to reveal voting patterns and behaviour; ensuring that communication is aligned to goals and objectives; and so forth.

The creative elements may include the composing of campaign messages and themes; defining target voters in new ways; and the selection of techniques to convey the campaign messages (Rensburg and Angelopulo, 1996:2).

The elements of planning mentioned above need to be applied to a political environment that does not remain static. Perhaps the most useful theoretical perspective for understanding the context in which election campaign planning must take place is that of systems theory.

#### **2.4.1 Systems theory and election campaign planning**

While a functional approach to systems theory describes parts of a system in terms of the individual roles they perform, general systems theory is a more appropriate framework for analysing election campaigns given that the focus is parts of a system and how they interact with each other in a cause and effect relationship. This interaction results in an interdependence of variables within a system that is specified within a “spatial or temporal boundary” (Meadow, 1980:37).

An understanding of election campaign planning in the context of systems theory inevitably has an impact on the type of decisions that are made in developing a *communication strategy* (refer to section 2.5).

A campaign organization, which is responsible for implementing a communication strategy, consists of paid staff and volunteers and, as is characteristic of systems, is structured hierarchically, with various levels of authority and responsibility. It operates within an external political environment that is constantly shifting and prone to changes in public opinion, the influence of competitors and media.

The campaign must be responsive and have the ability to adapt to these changes in order to be successful. It must also affect the environment favourably and, in particular, the decisions of target voters. Viewed in this way, the campaign organization causes effect to, and is affected by, the environment it operates in. It is therefore an open system, comprised of various sub-systems, in a democratic society (Moffitt, 1999; Steinberg, 1976).

In open systems, inputs - such as money, time and people - are transformed (throughput) into outputs - such as campaign messages, events and logistics. Those tasked with campaign planning must not only plan and monitor this process, but should be attentive to the impact of campaign outputs on the external environment.

To do so, feedback must be obtained, which can be gathered from a number of sources including public opinion polling and reports from volunteers (Rensburg and Angelopulo, 1996:8-9).

The systematic interaction between the campaign organization and the environment it intends to affect can be described in terms of three "realities". The objective reality describes political events "as they actually occur"; the subjective reality describes political events as "they are perceived by citizens"; and the constructed reality describes events as they "covered by the media" (McNair, 2007:11).

Campaign planning must also take into account the links between sub-systems within a campaign organization. Moffitt summarizes the impact of the interdependence of sub-systems in the following way: "anything that happens to one part of the organization – from within or without – can have direct repercussions for all the other parts of the organization" (1999:25).

Steinberg identifies five sub-systems within a campaign organization. The managerial sub-system is responsible for “planning, organizing and controlling” the campaign activities; the structural sub-system deals with hierarchy and protocol within the campaign organization; the psychosocial sub-system deals with the personalities of campaign staff and their relationships with one another; the technical sub-system “supplies the knowledge, techniques, equipment and facilities for campaign staff”; and the goals and values sub-system applies to the campaign itself and its individual staff (1976:85-86).

Planning for communication with the potential voter, for instance, which is primarily linked to the marketing function of a campaign, falls within the technical sub-system. However, “because the sub-systems overlap, it is difficult to consider any one sub-system without considering at least one more sub-system”.

The campaign’s finances would therefore also need to be considered in terms of how much money is available to communicate with voters – a function which falls under the managerial sub-system (Steinberg, 1976:87).

Two things are apparent from these practical examples: first that the “the property or behaviour” of one part of the system has an effect on the properties and behaviour of the system as a whole; and, secondly, that no part of a system has an “independent effect on the system as a whole” due to the interdependence of variables within an open system like an election campaign (Meadow, 1980:39).

Having contextualized campaign planning within the campaign organization as an open system, it is possible to discuss the main phases of the planning process.

#### **2.4.2 Phases of election campaign planning**

Campaign planning can be divided into two distinct phases: the assessment phase during which formative research for the campaign is conducted; and the creation phase during

which objectives and goals are set and the communication strategy is developed (Barker and Angelopulo, 2006:399-402).

While planning is not a linear process, the components of these phases are presented in a logical order in this section to illustrate planning as a step-by-step process as naturally as possible.

#### 2.4.2.1 *Formative research in the assessment phase*

Formative research, the foundation of the assessment phase, is a comprehensive process and must take into account all the factors that will have a bearing on the campaign. There are two main facets of this research: the situation analysis, which defines the overall political landscape in a qualitative sense; and the voting district analysis, which is an extensive, quantitative study of past voting patterns.

The methodology chosen for the formative research conducted for this study is also discussed in each of the sections to follow.

##### Situation analysis

Formative research requires a thorough situation analysis according to most campaign planning models, although not all agree on what the exact focus areas of the analysis should be (De Wet, 2010; Fourie, 1975; International Republican Institute, 1996; Mauser, 1983; Moffitt, 1999; Reinsborough and Canning, 2010; Steinberg, 1976).

The purpose of the situation analysis is for the planner to grasp, firstly, what the situation is that prompts a campaign response in a general sense and, secondly, what implications for campaign planning the unique situation requires the planner to consider.

This study broadly followed five focus areas for a situation analysis provided by O'Day (n.d.:8-11). First, the planner must familiarize themselves with the type of election to be contested as this has a direct impact on developing the strategy later on. For this study, legislation, regulations and Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) guidelines pertaining to elections in South Africa, and municipal elections in particular, was considered (refer to Chapter 3, section 3.2).

Second, the district or province in which the election takes place should be analysed. Often there are factors unique to the province that may bear influence on planning such as its population, infrastructure, and the geography of areas that need to be covered. How political office and bureaucracy is structured in the parts of the province that will be contested terrain should be outlined as well.

Socio-economic conditions need to be considered in a general sense in terms of various demographic factors such as unemployment rates, education levels, language and occupation. These factors are important for determining the type of campaign messages and themes that need to be developed at a later stage (refer to section 2.5.1), as well as the techniques used to reach target voters (refer to section 2.5.2).

For this study, statistics were sourced from reports by provincial government departments, government demographic reports and private sector research. Personal experience of having worked and travelled in the Northern Cape was also helpful in determining which factors have a distinct impact on planning considerations.

Third, the candidate or party running for election needs to be assessed across a range of factors. All viable opponents also need to be identified and analyzed on the same basis (Moffitt, 1999:22-24).

In the case of this study, the background or history of viable parties; their leadership and representation in government; past campaigns; organizational structures; and potential objectives and campaign messages for the 2011 election are discussed.

In this regard, the internal party literature such as constitutions, conference reports and IEC election results reports were studied. Press clippings and available literature on the parties were consulted (refer to Chapter 3, section 3.4).

Fourth, the extent of mass media in the province should be considered for the impact this will have on the techniques selected for delivering campaign messages to targeted voters.

For this study, community and commercial print media and radio stations operating in the Northern Cape were considered in terms of the ability to reach target voters, listenership/readership and cost-effectiveness. Data and reports on listenership/readership, advertiser profiles provided by the media themselves and general impressions from politicians and communicators dealing with the media were used to determine the suitability for use in conveying campaign messages.

Lastly, the results of past elections should be studied. Often, valuable information on voting patterns in the province is evident in trends such as support levels of parties over consecutive elections. There is space for the planner to be creative in terms of identifying trends and factors that may provide insight into the upcoming election.

For this study, a comparative analysis of national election results between the Western and Northern Cape provinces was used. The sample included results from 1994, the country's first democratic election, up until 2009, the election prior to the 2011 Municipal Elections.

The Western Cape is the only other coloured-dominated province in South Africa and, when studied in conjunction with the available literature on past elections there, provides useful explanations for voter behaviour in the Northern Cape, given the racialized voting patterns evident in the country (refer to Chapter 3, section 3.6.1).

The results of the 2009 National Elections, COPE's debut, in the Northern Cape were also studied in detail down to a municipal level to assess the balance of support for each of the viable parties contesting the 2011 election (refer to Chapter 3, section 3.6.2).

The study of past election results for the situation analysis is concerned primarily with macro-trends that reveal important information about the province whereas the voting district analysis is a more in-depth study that reveals micro-trends.

If the situation analysis is able to provide an overview of the political landscape of the election campaign on a macro level, the voting district analysis can provide detailed, valuable data for targeting specific voting populations and focusing campaign resources down to the micro-level of a voting district.

### The voting district analysis

Voting districts (VD's) are precincts used to group manageable numbers of registered voters around a common polling station where their votes may be cast. The Independent Electoral Commission determines the boundaries of these precincts and keeps a record of past election results in each for elections dating back to the 2000 municipal elections.

VD's are the smallest possible geographical unit for which past election results can be studied. VD's are grouped into wards which, in turn, are grouped into municipalities governed by local councils (refer to Chapter 3, section 3.2.2 for a detailed discussion on how these areas are delineated through a legislated process called "demarcation").

Studying trends per VD reveals the voting behaviour of the registered population on a micro level. This information enables the planner to set objectives and goals for the campaign. It also provides the data that helps to inform the planner on where to focus the campaign's resources of time, money and people in order to achieve those objectives and goals – known as the targeting strategy (refer to section 2.4.2.2).

It is generally agreed, that a form of VD analysis is fundamental to developing an effective communication strategy (Burton and O'Shea, 2010; Grey, 2007; O'Day, n.d.; Shaw, 2010).

Samples of past election results may be selected according to the following criteria: similarities in the fields of contestants or the type of election; the issues that dominated the campaign agendas; or the number of years that have passed since the election, with more recent examples being given preference on the premise that they would be more up-to-date with contemporary voter behaviour (Shaw, 2010:391-392).

The sample of past election results used for this study included at least four ballots per VD: the 2006 Municipal Elections (both the ward and proportional representation ballots); the 2009 National and Provincial Elections (both the National and Provincial ballots); and all by-election (called on a necessity basis if a public representative is no longer able to continue in office) ballots in the Northern Cape since 2006 (refer to Chapter 3, section 3.2.4 for a detailed explanation on the voting procedures for municipal elections).

The sample did not include elections prior to 2006 due to significant changes in the fields of viable political parties contesting past ballots in comparison to more recent ones (refer to Chapter 3, section 3.6 for an overview of past elections in the Northern Cape since the first democratic election in 1994).

Given the nature of the South African demarcation process, the other factor influencing the choice of sample was the complexity of using older data. Researchers wishing to use a sample of results down to a VD level dating back to the 2000 elections, however, may encounter difficulties due to the abolition or merging of voting districts in periodic demarcation processes that took place in 2005 and 2010.

While it is not impossible to trace changes in the structure of voting districts and reasonably estimate how voting patterns have changed, the process would be similar to a forensic audit due to the splitting of VD's into portions and the combining of these portions into new VD's.

A VD analysis reveals voter preference over the course of different elections and categorizes voting populations in terms of base votes, the opponent's base votes and swing votes. It is also possible to predict a turnout (how many people will vote) for the upcoming election through a VD analysis.

Turnout may be predicted in two ways. First, the turnout for a similar election in the past may be used. Second, the average turnout over the course of a number of elections can be calculated as a proportion. There is no universal formula for how large or small the sample size of past election results should be (Burton and O'Shea, 2010; Shaw, 2010).

For this study, the predicted turnout was calculated per VD using an average voter turnout percentage for elections included in the sample. Given that the sample included turnout for

at least two elections, and possibly more depending on whether by-elections had taken place in a specific VD, it is likely that predicted turnout will become more accurate in future studies when data from more elections is available to be included in the sample.

The number of registered voters at the time of the 2009 National and Provincial Elections, being the most recent registration data available at the time the VD analysis was conducted, was then multiplied by predicted turnout percentage to arrive at the predicted turnout in numbers.

The two factors that could, therefore, affect the accuracy of the predicted turnout figures generated in the VD analysis for this study, were slightly dated registration data and the sample size of turnouts for past elections used.

A *base vote* is simply the worst performance in terms of the proportion of votes received by the party in past elections included in the sample (Burton and O'Shea, 2010:83). For the 2011 municipal elections, three viable parties contested the ballot: the ANC, COPE and DA (refer to Chapter 3, section 3.4 for an overview of these parties). Base vote proportions were multiplied against the predicted turnout in numbers to get each of the party's base votes in numbers.

In the case of COPE, the party only contested one election prior to the 2011 Municipal elections, with the exception of by-elections in isolated wards: the National and Provincial elections in 2009. Its base vote was therefore established using a sample of two ballots in cases where no by-elections results were available for the party in a given VD. The party's base vote numbers were, as a result, less reliable than the DA's and ANC's which were determined using a minimum of four ballots.

The *swing vote* can be calculated by subtracting the sum of three parties' base votes in numbers from the predicted turnout in numbers. What remains is the swing potential in numbers, which can then be calculated as a proportion of the predicted turnout.

This is an important figure as the swing vote reflects the number and proportion of voters in a VD who are less partisan towards a particular party or candidate and may be more open to

persuasion by the campaign. These people have the potential to determine the outcome of an election should their numbers be large enough (Shaw, 2010:407-408).

In the case of the methodology used for this study, the swing vote may reflect a number of things: people who voted for different parties in the same election; people who changed party affiliation over consecutive elections; and people who voted for minority parties that may no longer exist, may not contest, or may be vulnerable in terms of maintaining support. What these voters all have in common is their potential to be persuaded and/or their weaker partisan affiliation toward a particular party.

The full range of VD analysis data was represented in spreadsheet format for each local council in the Northern Cape (refer to Appendix 2: VD Analysis data). How this data is put into practical use in the campaign planning process, is further explained in the section to follow.

#### 2.4.2.2 *Determining objectives and goals in the creation phase*

The determination of objectives and goals for the campaign forms part of the creation phase of campaign planning. For election campaigns in particular, the campaign objective is to get a single candidate, or a number of people elected, depending on the type of election. Achieving that objective requires an estimated number of votes, called the vote goal.

To be operationalized, objectives need to be valid, in the sense that they concern the purpose and context of the campaign. The second factor is attainability, meaning it should be realistically possible to achieve the objective when taking into account the scale of the campaign. The third is measurability - the extent to which a campaign has fallen short, exceeded or met an objective can be calculated (Fourie, 1975:33).

In determining objectives according to the above criteria, critical information such as the budget, timing of the campaign and other constraints must be considered for their impact on the attainability of objectives (Barker and Angelopulo, 2006:399-400).

In the case of this study, objectives are the number of seats the campaign aims to win on a local or district council. The proportion of votes received by COPE in each local council in the 2009 National and Provincial Elections was used to calculate how many seats on the council the party would have won, hypothetically, should it have been a Municipal election. The legislated formula for seat calculation in municipal elections was used for this purpose (refer to Appendix 1: Objectives calculations for practical examples).

This hypothetical number of seats was then used as a guide in determining objectives for the 2011 Municipal Election. Besides the use of data generated from these calculations and the VD analysis, the capacity of the party in each district to reach objectives was considered by way of personal communication with the district political leadership.

This factor, associated with the attainability of an objective, was an important consideration in setting objectives along with the campaign budget and schedule. Second, the total number of swing voters residing in each municipality was considered. Higher numbers of these voters naturally suggests more potential to increase a party's proportion through persuasive communication.

Third, the strategic importance of the council for future election outcomes was considered. Councils where COPE could potentially be in striking distance to govern were set more ambitious objectives than councils where the party's past performance suggested a more modest outcome.

It was also deemed important for the party to, at least, maintain a presence and support base in larger centres with high numbers of registered voters. These votes count for national and provincial elections in the future especially, since the focus of these elections is to gain seats in a provincial legislative body rather than on proportions of the vote in individual municipal councils.

These considerations were necessary due to the systematic nature of campaigns, in that one aspect of planning, in this case the setting of objectives, would naturally affect other aspects of planning.

Closely linked to the objective is the *vote goal*. This is the number of votes required in a particular election in order to achieve the objective. The vote goal should be a number of votes and not a percentage in order for local activists and campaign staff to have a relatively simple and accurate estimate of how many voters they need to favourably influence for the campaign (Gainer et al., n.d.:11).

Having set the objectives in terms of a number of seats the party wants to win, it was possible to calculate a municipal vote goal for each local council. This was done by multiplying the predicted turnout in numbers (determined by the VD analysis discussed in section 2.3.1.2) by the proportion of votes required to achieve the objectives, based on the legislated seat calculation formula for municipal elections in South Africa. The outcome is the municipal vote goal in numbers.

Factors such as voter turnout on Election Day can never be predicted 100% accurately. Vote goals are therefore speculative and the planner should be “conservative and error on the side of too many votes rather than too few” (O’Day, n.d.:12).

In this regard, municipal vote goals were inflated by a slight margin. For example, if a party wants to attain 3 seats, its total votes in a council divided by the quota formula for calculating seats in Municipal Elections must yield an outcome of at least 2.5 (outcomes are rounded off for seat calculations according to the legislated formula shown in Chapter 3, section 3.2.6). In this example, COPE’s municipal vote goal would be calculated to achieve an outcome of 2.7 instead to error on the side of caution.

Vote goals can be calculated upward for larger areas: the sum of municipal vote goals in a given district determines the district vote goal and the sum of district vote goals determines the provincial vote goal.

Calculations can then be made downwards for smaller demarcated areas within a local council. The wards comprising a local council are assigned portions of the municipal vote goal, called ward vote goals. VD’s making up wards are assigned portions of the ward vote goal, called VD vote goals (for practical examples refer to Appendix 2: VD Analysis data).

Given that a campaign operates with finite resources, it is important to have a plan for which voters in particular need to be persuaded in order to achieve vote goals and, subsequently, the campaign's objectives. This prevents precious resources from being wasted by trying to persuade all the people living in a given area.

Prioritising target voters residing in selected voting districts in order to reach campaign objectives is the function of the targeting strategy. Determining a targeting strategy in order to reach a campaign's objectives is a process that is not exclusive from the allocation of VD vote goals in order to reach a campaign objective, as will be discussed in the following section.

### Targeting strategy

Once all the VD's in the area the election is to be contested have been analysed and the objectives and municipal vote goals have been set, the campaign planner can determine which VD's should be designated as target VD's.

Generally, a campaign should take note of four factors in choosing to prioritize some VD's over others in allocating vote goals: the number of registered voters in a VD; the predicted turnout; the size of the campaign's base vote in the VD; and the amount of swing potential a VD has.

High numbers of voters prevalent in one or more of these factors in a particular VD suggests that it should be prioritized when setting vote goals above other VD's where one or more of these factors are not numerically significant to achieving the objective.

What targeting strategy should be followed once the voting district analysis calculations and the objectives and municipal vote goal have been completed is a matter of contention (Maarek, 1995; Morris, 1999; Steinberg, 1976).

Steinberg states that the planner “must go where the ducks are and concentrate on areas and constituencies with the greatest number of voters likely to turnout and support the candidate” (1976:178).

Maarek offers a choice, the first option being to neglect supportive segments of the population in order to go after those voters with high levels of “persuadability”, known as swing voters. The alternative is to consolidate the existing support base in the hopes that some supporters will “act as opinion relays” for those less sympathetic to the candidate (1995:38).

Morris advises the planner to “work to switch those who say they are voting for your opponent to your side – that’s where the action is” (1999:221). Ultimately, though, planning calls for a strategic decision to be made at this juncture based on the information at hand for every unique situation and the number of votes required to reach the campaign’s objectives.

In general, it is easier to target base voters and swing voters than it is to go after an opponent’s base vote (Shaw, 2010:165-208). There are times, however, where the dynamics of a VD that must be won demand that the campaign must go after an opponent’s base voters, in which case the availability of resources is assessed to determine to what extent the base vote can be neglected in order to pursue the opposition’s base.

A campaign must be strategically positioned in terms of who it wants to win over. Techniques vary for swing voters, who may need to be canvassed more heavily, base voters, who may only need to be reminded to vote, and the opponent’s base voters, who need to be converted.

The process of determining which VD’s should be targeted is not linear and goes hand in hand with setting vote goals for VD’s. For this study, VD’s where a vote goal exceeding a certain threshold was set, were considered to be target VD’s (how the number of swing and base voters as well as predicted turnout affected this decision in each locality is discussed in detail in Chapter 4, section 4.2, and Chapter 5, section 5.3).

Beyond what is evident from the voting district analysis, however, operational considerations should also play a part in allocating VD vote goals and determining target VD's. As is the case with objectives, a VD vote goal needs to be realistically achievable by the local campaign organization in a given area, the abilities of which may vary from place to place.

This type of targeting strategy is known as geographic targeting. With this method, voters are targeted by place of residence, on the assumption that there would be common issues affecting the entire population in a specific area.

An alternative method for targeting voters is demographic targeting. This involves segmenting the voting population by age, education levels, occupation and/or a host of other factors using statistical data and then developing messages that target each of these segments.

The planner should be cautious in using the demographic targeting approach for two reasons. First, the planner needs to ensure that the segments of the population the campaign is targeting are indeed large enough to deliver the amount of votes required. Second, the segments need to deliver a large enough turnout and proportion of the vote (Steinberg, 1976:178).

Besides the quantitative methodology chosen to analyze voters for this study, there are numerous other options available to campaigns. Often outsourced to political consultancy companies, the most common methods for analysis are political opinion polling and focus groups. Polling is a telephonic survey of a scientific sample of the voting population, using structured questions to produce quantifiable results on public opinion.

While acknowledging the "inability to project the results of a discussion to a population of thousands or millions", Luntz describes himself as a "committed disciple" of the focus group method due to the "uncensored intensity" of participant reactions. Also, the linguistic value of discussion can later be used to "turn language into a powerful political weapon" in terms of campaign messages (2007:73-75).

Other methods for smaller scale and less well-resourced campaigns include identifying issues in an area by observation and spending time in a locality talking and listening to people at random in public places, called windshield research (Political Campaign Management Tips, 2010). Ethnographic research on an area and demographic data may also prove to be fruitful resources, especially for the identification of values and attitudes.

In the case of this study, geographic targeting based on a sound voting district analysis was preferred. This provided data on a micro-level concerning political affiliation and voting patterns. Demographics of voters were considered in a general sense through the situation analysis.

Before discussing the final part of a campaign's creation phase, developing the communication strategy, the SWOT analysis, used in this study as a tool for strategic planning, is briefly explained.

### SWOT analysis

A classic aid to the strategic planning process is the SWOT analysis, which organizes factors for consideration into strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (De Wet, 2010:126). Strengths and weaknesses generally involve factors concerning the candidate or, internally, within the campaign organization. Opportunities and threats emanate from the external environment, which includes the media, viable opponents and the target voters (Mauser, 1983; Moffitt, 1999).

For the purposes of this study, the SWOT analysis was used primarily to assess the past and current strategies of the main parties contesting the 2011 ballot. The available literature and media clippings on each of the parties were considered in this regard.

Field observations of two by-elections that took place in De Aar and Petrusville on 25 August 2010, seven months before Election Day, were also conducted. The purpose of this was to ascertain what, in all probability, could be expected of the campaign strategies and

techniques of COPE and its viable opponents. This was useful for providing recommendations on how COPE could improve its own strategy and counter those of its opponents.

Developing the communication strategy, discussed in the following section, is the final part of the creation phase of campaign planning. It is also the element of campaign planning that comes closest to providing a blueprint for the campaign's implementation.

## **2.5 DEVELOPING THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

The communication strategy should take the form of a written, strategic document. It is a comprehensive plan for all organized communication activities aimed at contacting target voters up until Election Day.

The communication strategy is based on two principles. The first is that the campaign has finite resources that need to be used cost-effectively and, second, that different methods may be used to accomplish the same objective (O'Day, n.d.:29). For example, 6 000 flyers directly to the homes of your target voters, may accomplish more than expensive colour advertising spreads in a broadsheet newspaper.

A major consideration, therefore, is selecting and combining cost-effective ways of contacting the voter using the three main resources of a campaign - time, money and people - in a way that will, in all likelihood, meet the campaign's overall goals and objectives (Green and Gerber, 2008; Mauser, 1983; Rensburg and Angelopulo, 1996).

Typically, the communication strategy includes the targeting (already discussed under section 2.3.2.1), campaign messages, techniques, campaign organization requirements, schedule, budget and fundraising plan for fulfilling this purpose (Gainer et al., n.d.; Green and Gerber, 2008; O'Day, n.d.).

While each of the aspects of the strategy will be discussed in the sub-sections to come, the recommendations of this study for a communication strategy for COPE are limited to the messaging, targeting and techniques for contacting the voter.

As discussed in section 2.4.1, campaigns operate as open systems creating a need to consider them holistically in developing each aspect. With the exception of targeting (refer to section 2.4.2.2), all the other aspects of a communication strategy will therefore be discussed in the sub-sections to follow.

### **2.5.1 Campaign messaging**

Campaign messaging involves the choice of words and visuals the campaign plans to communicate, but does not include the techniques selected for communication or how the message will be packaged into different formats for each technique (Moffitt, 1999:139).

A message is the “single thought, idea, concept, truth or meaning” the campaign will use to persuade its target voters (Fourie, 1975:10). It is not the issues or themes a candidate or party plan to address or necessarily the campaign slogan, although both may form part of the message. Answering the question “why should I support you?”, as if it was coming from the potential voter, is a useful exercise for developing the message (O’Day, n.d.:21).

The campaign message should also set the tone for the campaign. Tone is the manner in which communication is phrased and delivered that must run consistently through the issues the campaign chooses to speak on, called campaign themes, and how they are addressed. A campaign should choose only a limited set of themes, and especially those that are important to its target voters (Maarek, 1995:47-48).

All themes must be constantly linked back to the campaign message during the course of the campaign. It must be kept in mind that the theme is not the problem itself but the solution to the problem that is important to the voter (O’Day, n.d.:26). The IRI states that

besides the candidate's position on an issue, another factor in theme selection is whether the candidate or party is best qualified to address the issue (1996:43).

Luntz provides rules for the effective use of language in a campaign message. The message should be simple, short, credible (believable) and consistent in its repetition throughout the campaign. It should be novel or new, and speak to the voter's aspiration in a relevant context. It may also include a powerful question, distinctive sound or texture (2007:1-33).

A good message can also show contrast between the candidate or party and their opponents by highlighting the positives of the former and the negatives of the latter, or simply by demonstrating difference. Finally, a message must be targeted to the voters a campaign plans to persuade to achieve its objective (O'Day, n.d.:22-23). The campaign message need not ascribe to all of the aforementioned criteria but should at least possess a fair number of these characteristics to be successful.

Morris summarizes the importance of a strong message thus:

*"A richer candidate with a weaker message will generally lose to a poorer candidate with a stronger message as long as the candidate with more limited money has enough funds to get his or her message out."*

(1999:27)

An important aspect to consider in developing a message is that of credibility i.e. how believable or trustworthy a party is in the eyes of the voter. How much negativity a campaign should allow, or how much time it should spend attacking the opponent in an attempt to lower their credibility is dependent, firstly on the tone that has been set for the messaging, and, secondly, on how the campaign is faring in comparison to its viable opponents in the run-in to Election Day (Morris, 1999; O'Day, n.d.).

For example, should a campaign appear to be lagging behind its opponent and there is no alternative, then negativity might as well be considered as an option for attempting to level the playing field.

However, should the campaign be ahead of its opponent, negativity may come across as the flogging of a dead horse, thereby failing to inspire and mobilize supporters vote on Election Day.

Negative campaigning in areas that are strongly partisan toward a campaign's opponent may serve the opposite purpose of what the campaign intended, mobilizing opposition voters to go to the polls by piquing their interest in a campaign that otherwise would have seen them stay at home.

In the end, the use of negative campaigning techniques is not a science and should be measured and considered according to what feedback a campaign is receiving from its external environment.

Messages are, of course, delivered to the potential voter via various techniques, which will be discussed in the section to follow.

### **2.5.2 Techniques for contacting the target voter**

While the communication strategy is the plan through which the campaign will achieve its goals and objectives, techniques are the means by which this will be accomplished i.e. the activities that will be undertaken to implement a strategy (IRI, 1996:10).

Each technique for contacting the voter "can accomplish three things to varying degrees – persuade target voters; identify base voters (supporters), swing voters and the opponent's base voters; and turnout the vote" (O'Day, n.d.:30-31).

Persuading target voters generally applies to convincing either the opponent's base voters to switch allegiance or getting swing voters to lean toward the campaign. Turning out the vote, otherwise known as the Get-out-the-vote phase of the campaign, takes place in the close run-up to Election Day and is aimed at mobilizing sufficient voters to go to the polls and cast their vote for the candidate or party.

There are a large variety of techniques that can be employed to contact the voter. A distinction can be made between techniques that allow indirect, such as mass media coverage, and direct contact with the voter, which includes personal contact methods like door-to-door canvassing for example (Maarek, 1995:89-98).

The purpose of describing the various techniques below is not to debate their merits or effectiveness in various contexts, but instead to represent the range of options that may be considered for the communication strategy.

One of the traditional techniques for voter contact is *door to door canvassing*, involving volunteers and/or the candidate making personal contact with the voter.

Canvassing generally involves three concurrent phases that need to be planned for and a final Get-out-the-vote phase. First, VD's need to be canvassed street by street in order to identify supporters, take requests for more information or campaign branding material from supporters, and to note where follow-up visits need to be made. Interpersonal contact is made with the voter by the candidate or volunteer canvassers on a door to door basis.

Second, the same areas need to be re-canvassed in order to visit homes where target voters were not reached the first time around. Third, canvassers need to make good on the required follow-ups (Burton and O'Shea, 2010:193-196).

The fourth phase which occurs shortly before and on Election Day, is the Get-out-the-vote phase. This involves contacting supporters to urge them to vote and arranging the logistics for people requiring assistance to get to the polling station. This phase requires careful planning as the costs tends to run very high, something which many campaigns do not take seriously enough during the earlier phases (Green and Gerber, 2008).

Closely related to canvassing is the *literature drop* where campaign literature is left at the household for later perusal. Literature can also be handed out literature at strategic locations such as busy intersections, known as a *literature handout*.

*Phone banks*, teams of people who are either paid staff or volunteers tasked with telephonically contacting voters, may be employed to monitor support levels; respond to

queries raised during canvassing efforts; remind people to vote; or to persuade voters to consider the campaign's candidate.

Automated calls, called robo-calls, can be programmed to deliver a generic message to a voter, but this is neither effective nor cost-effective according to the findings of numerous studies (Green and Gerber, 2008).

A popular form of personal contact is for the candidate to attend *coffees* to meet supporters and interested parties in an intimate setting such as a supporter's home. Of course, the idea of a coffee-drinking session does not fit all cultural and social contexts. This idea can be adapted to any slightly smaller, more intimate gatherings. Other examples include *braai's* (barbeques) and day-time yard meetings with homemakers or younger voters.

Supporters may also be requested to endorse the candidate to their friends through the use of a card template provided by the campaign. *Endorsements* from influential figures in a community, or celebrities in the case of high-profile campaigns, are another form of this tactic.

Civic organizations such as churches or special-interest groups may also be willing to endorse a candidate or offer their time and people for canvassing and other tasks on a voluntary basis. This is a viable option in some instances, but campaign planning should consider two factors in this regard.

First, civic organizations are external to the campaign organization and therefore outside of its planning. This may result in uncoordinated or even tactically incorrect activities taking place. Secondly, these groups often come with their own political baggage and may end up hurting a campaign's image.

There are two types of techniques related to events. The first is preset events which are not organized by the campaign, that the candidate attends and possibly addresses, such as gala dinners, debates or funerals, either by careful planning or invitation from an individual or organization.

The second is the *created event*, which is organized by the campaign. The most common form of this tactic is the rally where larger numbers of supporters are addressed by the candidate (O'Day, n.d.:48-49).

*Visibility* is a technique that is more about creating an impression of an outpouring of support for the campaign rather than persuading voters. This tactic aims to create a tangible presence for the campaign in a given area (Shaw, 2010:348-349). This can be achieved in any number of ways, most commonly though through T-shirts, posters, bumper stickers and other branding material.

Finally, both *paid* and *earned media* form an integral part of any campaign's techniques, especially in media-centred democracies where most political decisions made by the public are influenced by information gained through mass media.

*Paid media* refers to advertising in the press, on radio or online. *Earned media* refers to the publicity a campaign generates, generally through press releases, interviews, events and mentions in editorials and reports.

## **2.6 IMPLEMENTING A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY: CAMPAIGN ORGANIZATION**

While not included in the scope of the recommendations of this study for a communication strategy, consideration must be given to the ability to practically implement the strategy by a campaign organization. As discussed in section 2.2.3, a campaign organization may consist of paid staff and/or volunteers and is structured hierarchically.

In the case of some political parties or candidates, the campaign organization may be set up as a parallel entity, purely for the purpose of running the campaign, after which it is dissolved (Steinberg, 1976:47).

O'Day suggests that, in considering the implementation of the communication strategy, the principle that a campaign's techniques determine its organizational structure should be applied (n.d.:41-42).

For example, a campaign that relies heavily on the door-to-door canvassing of voters would need to include more volunteer coordinators and data-capturers in its organization as opposed to a campaign relying more on mass media that would require more communications officers to write press releases and maintain good relations with journalists. Naturally, there are always positions that remain fixtures in a campaign organization such as the campaign manager and treasurer.

Planning must also consider what coordination will be required between the various levels of the campaign organization in cases where local campaigns run simultaneously with provincial or national efforts. Coordination may require synchronicity of administrative functions such as submitting voter information into a database or providing updates on changes to the scheduling.

Coordinating and supervising the activities of full-time staff and volunteers must be carefully considered to ensure that staff with the correct skills or work preferences are matched to the correct task.

For example, some volunteers may either not want to go door to door canvassing voters or may just not be good or suitable for the task. They should be scheduled to do office administrative work, or switched to literature drops or house signage delivery. Regardless of the task, every volunteer should be thoroughly trained before sending them out to the streets.

A volunteer who is not familiar with the campaign message or the protocol of addressing potential voters can be harmful to the campaign. It is also important to use the best volunteers to canvass difficult VD's where many swing or base voters for opponents live, as this task requires more persuasion and experience (Shaw, 2010:75-88).

The various levels of a campaign organization's hierarchy are required, both horizontally and vertically, to coordinate the campaign in instances such as plans for visits from national or provincial politicians in order to boost a local campaign; the provision of campaign material to various localities; and the creating of opportunities for earned media coverage that otherwise would not have been granted to a small local campaign (O'Day, n.d.:47-48).

Proper coordination is based on the internal communication between various levels of the campaign, especially when the environment encompasses large districts with a central planning and operational centre. Often information or data needs to be relayed and this needs to arrive both timeously and in acceptable formats.

A crucial factor for the campaign organization to consider in implementing the communication strategy is the scheduling of campaign events, to be discussed in the section to follow.

### **2.6.1 Scheduling of campaign events**

The campaign schedule is a time-bound plan for when all campaign activities need to be implemented. Typically depicted in spreadsheet or calendar format, schedules indicate where and when an activity is due to take place (Shaw, 2010:373-388). All recommendations for a campaign strategy must be considered in terms of scheduling implications.

Given that time is one of the major limited resources for a campaign, campaign activities should be considered not only for maximum impact, but also for feasibility in terms of the time and complexity involved in the implementation.

Practically, campaign organization staff must develop schedules in order to coordinate campaign activities. Schedules need to be communicated internally as well as with media and the public. Schedules should be media-oriented to ensure that the timing of campaign events enables maximum media coverage (Steinberg, 1976:56).

Schedules also invariably have financial implications for a campaign. Because a campaign works in phases that require varying levels of campaign activity, schedules should take into account what is affordable for a campaign during each phase so as to ensure that it does not run out of the precious resource of money before Election Day.

The costs of each activity such as logistics, the production of campaign material and paid media coverage should be considered in a campaign's budgeting and fundraising to be discussed in the section to follow.

### **2.6.2 Budget and fundraising**

All aspects of a campaign's strategy need to be in-line with the funds available for campaign activities. Fundraising is an essential activity for a campaign to undertake and involves the soliciting of funds or loans from individual donors or organizations.

A campaign cannot realistically be allocated a campaign budget without the proper fundraising mechanisms in place to support it. A budget delineates the finances available to a campaign into what will be spent for specific purposes like campaign material, paid media coverage, logistics, salaries, telephone costs etc.

Money is a limited resource for campaigns and due consideration needs to be given to the cost-effectiveness of campaign activities. The guiding principle is that activities should win as many votes as possible at the minimum cost. Targeting voters is especially important for determining where resources should be expended in order to gain the best result in terms of votes for the campaign.

## **2.7 SUMMARY**

An election campaign is a set of organized communication activities that aim to reach voters in order to persuade them to vote for a political party or candidate. Election campaigns rely on the limited resources of time, money and people to achieve political objectives.

Election campaign planning is best described in terms of systems theory. Campaign organizations, required for implementing a campaign, are structured hierarchically and are

considered to be open systems, in that campaign outputs, in the form of organized communication activities, affect the external environment in which a campaign operates.

Changes in this environment also require campaigns to be responsive, achieved through making changes to a campaign based on feedback. Because various sub-systems exist within a campaign organization, planning for one aspect of a campaign, invariably affects other aspects.

Internally, changes to a campaign's techniques, for instance, may impact on the campaign's resources. This in turn may require adjustments to the budget and campaign schedule. Externally, decisions taken in the implantation of the campaign's communication strategy affect the impact the campaign is having in persuading target voters to support it.

The implementation of a communication strategy is preceded by a planning period. There are two phases to election campaign planning: formative research and the setting of objectives and goals.

Formative research generally involves a situation analysis, which is a qualitative assessment of the context of the campaign, and a voting district analysis, which is a quantitative analysis of voting statistics and behaviour using samples of past election results for the localities the campaign will contest.

For this study, the situation analysis involved six aspects. The type of election was considered in terms of the legislation relating to municipal elections in South Africa. The context of the election was analysed in terms of the Northern Cape province and its socio-economic conditions.

The main parties contesting the ballot, the media operating in the Northern Cape, and past elections in the Northern Cape were also discussed as part of the situation analysis.

A voting district analysis is a quantitative method used to produce data that can be used to set the campaign objectives and goals. A sample of past election results is used to determine a predicted turnout (the number of people likely to vote in an election), base vote (the minimum number of votes a party is likely to receive in a given voting district), and the swing vote (the number of voters without a clear partisan persuasion).

The sample selected for this study included both ballots of the 2006 Municipal Elections, both ballots of the 2009 National and Provincial Elections and all by-elections results that may have taken place in a particular locality during this period. This was deemed to be the most appropriate sample given the significant changes to demarcations and main parties contesting the ballots in election prior to 2006.

The second phase of election campaign planning, the setting of objectives and goals, involves calculating how many votes need to be won in order to get a candidate elected or achieve a certain threshold of votes. The ability of a campaign to achieve an objective must be a consideration. Goals are the milestones a campaign needs to reach on its path toward achieving its overall objectives.

For this study, goals were set in terms of votes required in each locality in order to reach to an objective of seats to be won on a local or district council. Priority voting districts where the campaign would need to focus its resources were identified as part of a *targeting strategy*.

Targeting some localities based on voting district analysis data, helps a campaign to decide where limited resources need to be expended in order to achieve the best result for the campaign.

In selecting voting districts to be prioritized as part of the targeting strategy for COPE's 2011 Municipal Election campaign, the following criteria was considered: the number of registered voters in a VD; the predicted turnout; the size of the campaign's base vote in the VD; and the amount of swing potential a VD has.

Higher vote goals were set for targeted voting districts and recommendations made for campaign resources to be directed primarily toward these localities.

Once the election campaign planning is completed, the communication strategy can be developed. A communication strategy is the comprehensive plan for how a campaign will go about pursuing its objectives.

The communication strategy typically includes the targeting strategy; messages a campaign will use to persuade voters; the techniques it will use to reach voters with the message;

campaign organization requirements in order to implement the campaign; the campaign schedule; and the budget and fundraising plan.

Messaging refers to the core points that a campaign aims to communicate to its target voters in order to persuade them to vote for a political party or candidate in an election. Techniques are the methods a campaign employs to contact the target voter with the message as part of the communication strategy.

A campaign organization is required to implement the communication strategy. An organization of this nature has clearly defined roles and responsibilities for part-time or full-time staff and is structured accordingly.

Two of the key tasks in implementing a communication strategy is the drawing up and managing of a campaign budget (a plan for how a campaign's financial resources will be spent), as well as a campaign schedule (a detailed plan for when campaign activities need to be executed, often represented in a spreadsheet or calendar format).

The scope of this study considered three of these aspects in detail for the purpose of making recommendations for COPE's 2011 election campaign in the Northern Cape: messaging, techniques and targeting. Other aspects generally included in a communication strategy were considered only to the extent where they may impact on recommendations made for these three aspects, given that election campaigns are systematic in nature.

## CHAPTER 3: SITUATION ANALYSIS

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyzes the situation prior to the 2011 municipal elections in the Northern Cape based on five factors: the type of election and what legislation is applicable to it; the context of the election based on the province, its municipal councils and socio-economic conditions; main parties contesting the 2011 elections; provincial media; and past election results.

### 3.2 THE TYPE OF ELECTION

The focus of this study is the 2011 Municipal Elections in the Northern Cape. The purpose of the election is for communities to elect political representatives to serve as councillors in local government. There are three categories of municipality in South Africa as established by the Municipal Structures Act, No. 17 of 1998 (South Africa, 1998b), and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, No. 108 of 1996 (South Africa, 1996a).

“Category A municipalities”, known as metropolitan councils, govern large urban and industrialized zones. These councils have full legislative and executive powers, meaning they are able to create and implement by-laws within the municipal territory.

Category B municipalities, known as local councils, share legislative and executive powers with Category C municipalities, known as district councils. District councils are responsible for the planning and development of local municipalities within their jurisdiction (Hendrickse, Olivier and Venter, 2006:8-9).

In addition to these categories, there are also District Management Areas (DMA's) that are rural, sparsely populated and under the jurisdiction of the district council. For the 2011 election, all DMA's in the Northern Cape were absorbed into the territories of the various local councils as a result of the demarcation process (refer to section 3.2.4).

In municipal elections, the public vote to elect representatives to serve on the councils of each of these municipality types, after which the successful candidates are required to carry out their duties as per the relevant legislation. This is discussed in the section to follow.

### **3.2.1 Role of the councillor**

Regarding the role of municipal councils, the objectives of Section 152 of the Constitution are applicable: “democratic and accountable government; community involvement and consultation; promoting social and economic development; ensuring a self and healthy environment; and ensuring “the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner” (South Africa, 1996a:ss. 1).

The Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000, while echoing the Constitution, provides the additional objectives of: ensuring equitable access to services which residents are entitled to; promoting gender equality in the exercise of the municipality’s executive and legislative authority; and ensuring the progressive realisation of constitutional rights that are applicable to the local government sphere (South Africa, 2000b:s. 4, ss. 2).

The Constitutional rights referred to relate to the environment, housing, healthcare, food and water, social security, and education (South Africa, 1996a:s. 24-27, 29).

Section 153 of the Constitution broadly attributes responsibilities to elected councillors in order to fulfil the above-mentioned objectives: “structure and manage [a municipality’s] “administration and budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community; and to promote the social and economic development of the community” (South Africa, 1996a:ss. 1).

A councillor fulfils their responsibilities in a practical sense by ratifying council decisions on important documents such as a municipality’s annual budget and development plans through exercising a voting right.

A councillor also serves on various committees that discuss specific aspects of a municipality's work in order to develop policies and proposals for the council's consideration. In addition, certain councillors may act as chairpersons of "ward committees", which serve as public participation forums (SALGA, 2006:48-50).

The Municipal Structures Act compels a councillor to monitor and evaluate the work of a municipality. This takes the form of an annual review of "the needs of the community; its priorities to meet those needs; its processes for involving the community; its organizational and delivery mechanisms for meeting the needs of the community; and its overall performance" in achieving the objectives as set out in the Constitution (South Africa, 1998:s. 19).

The review generally focuses on a council's budget and performance information against the objectives set. The review must be of a standard that is compliant with national treasury regulations and other public finance legislation such as the Municipal Finance Management Act, No. 56 of 2003 (South Africa, 2003).

During the carrying out of a councillor's duties, a code of conduct stipulating standards of behaviour and discipline must be followed. The code forms part of the Municipal Structures Act and regulates, amongst other things, ethical matters such as disclosure of financial interests; attendance standards at council meetings; and a councillor's relationship with the administration and property of a municipality (South Africa, 1998b:sch. 5).

Before a candidate can be successfully elected as a public representative, specific criteria to be eligible to run for the position of councillor must be fulfilled.

#### *3.2.1.1 Eligibility to run for councillor*

Section 158 of the Constitution allows for any person who is eligible to vote in a municipal area to run as a candidate for election to a municipal council with the exception of "unrehabilitated insolvents"; those declared unsound of mind by a court; and people

convicted of an offence and sentenced to more than 12 months in prison without the option of a fine. If elected, a candidate may also not continue to be an employee of the municipality, a member of the National Assembly, National Council of Provinces, provincial legislature or another municipal council (South Africa, 1996a:ss. 1-2).

Party lists of candidates for proportional seats must be submitted by a deadline set by the IEC and in a format prescribed by the Municipal Electoral Act Regulations. The Municipal Electoral Amendment Act No. 14 of 2010 has raised the fee required by the IEC for a political party to submit lists of candidates who will contest elections in a municipality from R2000 to R2500. A candidate who is unaffiliated to a party, called an "independent", must pay R500 to be eligible (South Africa, 2010:s. 17).

All voting during an election, and governance by a council thereafter, takes place within boundaries that delineate voting districts, wards and municipalities. The process of determining these boundaries is known as "demarcation".

### **3.2.2 Demarcation**

Municipal boundaries are determined by the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB) in accordance with the Municipal Demarcation Act 27 of 1998. Municipalities are further delimited into wards, each served by an individual ward councillor once elected.

The responsibility to determine appropriate numbers of wards in this regard is that of the Minister for Cooperative Governance. Councillor allocation is done in accordance with the Municipal Structures Act which prescribes a formula that takes into account the population in a given territory. The Structures Act also tasks the MDB with the responsibility of delimitation for every municipal election, making it an ongoing process with ward boundaries evolving over time.

Within wards are voting districts (VD's) which are established by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), the body responsible for managing elections in accordance with the

Electoral Commission Act 51 of 1996. Each VD is allocated a polling station where balloting is to take place on Election Day (Hendrickse, Olivier and Venter, 2006:5-7).

Section 23 of the Municipal Demarcation Act requires that the MDB and IEC work in close consultation on how changes to delimitations may affect the representation of voters in a given territory. This is due to the delivery of services after an election often being planned on the basis of wards, with ward committees being able to participate in discussions on the development required in their demarcated area.

It is also the responsibility of the IEC to provide information to the public on their eligibility to vote in a given demarcated area. This is particularly important for municipal elections, as will be discussed in the following section.

### **3.2.3 Eligibility to vote**

The national common voter's roll, a list of all registered voters, applies to municipal elections. However, voters are required to register in a ward in which they reside and will need to re-register in a new location if they have changed their residential address after the last election.

In addition, a person must be 18 years or older, a South African citizen and have a bar-coded Identity document or temporary ID to be eligible to vote (Hendrickse, Olivier and Venter, 2006:20-21).

For National and Provincial Elections voters do not necessarily need to vote at the polling station where they reside. This is not the case in municipal elections because of the need for localized interests to take precedence in determining who should represent a specific area.

Members of the public who want to vote are required to register their names on the voter's roll on the voter registration weekend dates prior to the election, which the Electoral Commission Act compels the IEC to organize (South Africa, 1996b:s. 5).

Often voters will be allocated to a different ward or polling station by the regular demarcation process. In this instance, despite not having relocated since the last election, a voter will need to verify if re-registration at a new polling station is necessary according to the Local Government: Municipal Electoral Act, No. 27 of 2000 (South Africa, 2000a:s. 7). This can also be done during the voter registration weekends mentioned above.

The electoral system for Municipal Elections in South Africa is discussed in the section to follow.

### **3.2.4 Electoral system**

In South Africa a mixed electoral system of both first-past-the-post (FPTP) and proportional representation (PR) is applied to municipal elections in accordance with the Municipal Structures Act.

FPTP may be described as a majoritarian type of electoral system, requiring a simple plurality of votes for a candidate to be successful. PR is described as a proportional system and is designed to incorporate minority representation in government (Heywood, 2002:233-239).

Schedule 1 of the Municipal Structures Act provides details on the type of ballots used for voting in municipal elections. On arrival at the polling station, voters are issued three ballot papers enabling them to vote for ward, PR, and district council representation. The ward vote follows the FPTP system and is for an individual, with the ward candidate who receives the most votes being elected (South Africa, 1998b:s. 8).

The PR vote is for a political party. The IEC requires parties to submit a list of candidates in order of preference, which is prescribed by the Municipal Structures Act (South Africa, 1998b:s. 9). The number of proportional seats on a council that a party can fill with its list candidates is then determined by the following formula in Schedule 1 of the Act:

*Total ward and PR votes for all parties / (number of seats on council – number of elected independent candidates) + 1 (fractions disregarded)* (South Africa, 1998b:s. 12)

The outcome of the above calculation is called *the quota*. The total ward and PR votes each individual party received is divided by the quota to get the amount of proportional seats a party is entitled to fill.

The number of successful ward candidate's the party has achieved is subtracted to arrive at a final allocation of proportional seats for each party. In the case of surplus seats on the council after the calculations have been done, seats are awarded in order of the highest surpluses obtained by parties after the quota allocations.

The district council vote, addressed in Schedule 2 of the Municipal Structures Act, is also a vote for political parties and is used to fill 40% of the seats available in the district municipality from party lists. The same formula described above for the PR vote in a local council is used. The other 60% of seats on a district council are filled through an internal election in each newly-elected local council that must take place within two weeks after the announcement of the election results (South Africa, 1998b:s. 2-7).

Should a local municipality be allocated more than one seat on the district council, then elected councillors will vote for lists submitted by parties, with the party that has the highest surplus after the quota calculation is applied being entitled to have their list candidates elected to the district (South Africa, 1998b:s. 14-22).

In the case of two parties contesting elections in a given council, the required margin for victory is simply 50% plus one of all votes cast, which automatically translates into a majority of council seats.

However, in the case of three or more viable parties contesting, it is possible to form a governing coalition among parties who received minority portions of the vote that together add up to a majority.

A further aspect of municipal elections that is the subject of legislation, or lack thereof, is the funding of the various independent and political party campaigns.

### **3.2.5 Political party funding**

Despite a campaign by the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA) and a commitment by the ruling African National Congress (ANC) to introduce legislation regarding the funding of political parties and their campaigns, no laws have yet been passed in South Africa to regulate the funding of political parties (Calland, 2006:31-32).

There is, however, legislation concerning the state funding of political parties in the interests of democratic contest through the Public Funding of Represented Political Parties Act No. 103 of 1997 (South Africa, 1997) and its counterpart in this context, the Northern Cape Political Party Fund Act No. 7 of 2009 (Northern Cape (South Africa), 2009).

Under this legislation, parties are funded by the National Assembly and provincial legislatures on a proportional basis according to their representation: the more seats a party has, the more funding it receives. The principle of equity is also considered in that a fixed threshold for minimum allocations is applied as well as a weighted scale of representation for allocations to parties (Northern Cape (South Africa), 2009:s. 5).

According to the Act, the use of funds by a party also needs to be accounted for by parties and independently audited, unspent balances repaid and money used for purposes “compatible with its functioning as a political party in a modern democracy” (Northern Cape (South Africa), 2009:s. 2-3).

### **3.2.6 Campaigning conduct**

Regarding campaigning conduct, the Local Government: Municipal Electoral Act (South Africa, 2000a) prohibits a range of actions and recommends punitive measures ranging from

a fine to 10 years imprisonment. Prohibited conduct relating most closely to campaign strategy and tactics includes:

*using undue influence to persuade a person to vote or not to vote for a particular party or candidate; preventing persons from gaining reasonable access to voters; unlawfully preventing the holding of political meetings, marches or demonstrations; intentional false statements or the publishing of false information; the removal of placards, billboards or posters of opponents; displaying or distributing billboards, placards, pamphlets or posters on voting day within the boundaries of the voting station; the omission of the word "advertisement" and the name of the publisher and printer from publishing material circulated after the election is called (Hendrickse, Olivier and Venter, 2006:38-39).*

Section 75 also outlines prohibits all campaigning on Election Day and any political activity within the boundaries of a voting station (South Africa, 2000a). To complement the Act, an Electoral Code of Conduct is included as a schedule. While the Code repeats the prohibited campaigning conduct for political parties and persons, it also includes provisions for the role of media, the IEC and women (South Africa, 2000a:Sch. 1, 6-8).

The Electoral Commission Act lists the powers, duties and functions of the IEC, one of which is to "establish and maintain liaison and cooperation with (political) parties" through Party Liaison Committee (PLC) meetings at a municipal, provincial and national level (South Africa, 1996b:s. 5).

PLC meetings are important for addressing the finer details of relations between contesting parties, raising concerns about campaign conduct and discussing IEC election preparations. Complaints may be laid with the South African Police Services as well if the campaigning conduct of opponents violates any criminal legislation.

An electoral court is also established by the Electoral Commission Act (South Africa, 1996b:ss. 18-20). The court has the status of a supreme court and may issue a range of orders enforcing punitive measures for prohibited conduct. This may range from a formal warning, to fines or even the docking of votes from an individual or party (South Africa, 2000a:s.78).

### 3.3 THE CONTEXT OF THE ELECTION

Having discussed the legislative framework for applicable to the 2011 Municipal elections in South Africa, the Northern Cape province as the focus for this study will now be contextualized. This will be discussed in terms of geography, demographics, contested terrain and the socio-economic environment in which the election took place.

#### 3.3.1 The province

The Northern Cape is the largest of South Africa's provinces, covering almost a third of the country's territory: 362 592km<sup>2</sup>. Much of the province is comprised of vast stretches of semi-desert. Overall, the province may be regarded as rural.

The Northern Cape is also the province with the smallest population: 1.13 million according to 2008 mid-year estimates, or 2.3% of the country's total population. The population is estimated to grow at a rate of 0.43% per annum between 2010 and 2021, the slowest rate of all provinces (Northern Cape (South Africa). Department of Economic Development, 2010:1-10).

The population density of 8.8 people per squared kilometre gives a good idea of the lengths any campaign may need to go to in order to reach its targeted voters (StatsSA, 2009, cited in SAIRR, 2010:22).

The sparse distribution of voters, coupled with the defining feature of the province being its vastness, results in extensive distances needing to be covered to reach voters that are of strategic importance to the campaign. For example, the distance between Kimberley, on the province's eastern border with the Free State, and Alexander Bay, on the province's western

coastline, is 987km. This is further than the distance between Kimberley and the country's east coast metropole of Durban: 739km (SAexplorer, n.d.).

Additionally, most municipal areas have at least one ward made up of VD's that consist of sparsely populated rural farm land that, nevertheless, is inhabited by target voters. This is an important factor to consider in a targeting strategy for voters as some rural areas may not be viable in terms of the cost of campaigning compared the number of votes that could likely be gained.

The distances impact in numerous ways on campaign planning, from the importance of budgeting adequately for travel and transport costs, to the time it takes to distribute campaign material to all targeted areas, to the challenge of scheduling an itinerary for provincial and national leaders of a party to reach an acceptable amount of important areas on the campaign trail. In a nutshell, distance most severely impacts on the two resources of time and money.

Northern Cape weather may also vary significantly, from temperatures reaching 40 degrees Celsius in the Kalahari region to -6 degrees Celsius in Sutherland in the Karoo in winter (Northern Cape (South Africa). Department of Economic Development, 2010:3).

Given the semi-desert environment, temperatures are often lower in the *platteland* than in other parts of the country. This may affect volunteer productivity in the late evenings, attendance at evening community meetings or rallies, and possibly voter turnout on Election Day given that this date is normally scheduled in mid-winter.

The road network is largely underdeveloped and at times hazardous to a driver's safety. In residential areas, township roads are often gravel and uneven, impacting on vehicles and therefore fuel and maintenance expenses.

This may be especially pronounced during the Get-out-the-vote phase of a campaign when voters, most of whom do not use motorized transport to get to the polls, need to be taxied to polling stations. In many areas only four-wheel drive vehicles are effectively able to navigate the terrain, which further impacts on resource requirements.

The same applies to roads linking many strategically important towns and villages. For example, the three towns making up the Karoo Hoogland municipality - Sutherland, Williston and Fraserburg – are only in part linked by tarred roads, with Sutherland accessible only by a fair stretch of gravel from either side. In some cases there is no direct road link between two places, forcing the driver to take wide detours to access the next stop.

The provincial road network comprises 3134 kilometres of paved roads (12%) and 22562 kilometres of unpaved roads (88%). Just maintaining this extensive network would require an estimated budget that is almost five times the amount the provincial Roads and Public Works Department receives (Northern Cape (South Africa). Department of Roads and Public Works, 2010:17).

Given that the election is scheduled during the drier winter season, the odds of traversing pot-holed roads with the lack of visibility that comes with storms, is fortunately reduced.

The last constitutionally-mandated and finalized census was conducted more than a decade ago (the census conducted in October 2011 had not been audited yet at the time of writing). Since provincial and municipal government have not developed a strong culture of researching and statistically representing the population, much of the detailed data available from national government was either estimated down to a municipal level at best, or is out-dated and potentially inaccurate, especially on a voting district level.

The scarcity of reliable data can impact on a campaign wishing to develop campaign messages or target voters based on demographic data. Also, due to the informal nature of many residential areas, accurate street addresses often do not exist or may be confusing.

Local volunteers naturally know their neighbourhoods very well and will for the most part be able to overcome this problem, but it does present a challenge, nevertheless, for recording canvassing data, coordinating the work of volunteers and information sharing between the various levels of the campaign's hierarchy.

Given that the campaign plan must address an entire province, there is naturally a large diversity of zonal classifications that need to be considered. This can range from the highly-urbanized contexts for campaigns in Sol Plaatje municipality (Kimberley) and Khara Heis

(Upington) to the vast rural district of John Toale Gaetsewe, each with significant variations in infrastructure and media, impacting on campaign techniques as well as budget pressures.

The Bureau of Market Research's (BMR) projection model classified a portion of 43.9% of the population as coloured in 2009, 45.6% as Black and 10.3% as white (cited in SAIRR, 2010:20).

To a large extent, the black portion of the population is located in the Frances Baard and John Taole Gaetsewe districts, while the remaining districts are coloured-dominated, with Namakwa exhibiting a coloured population of 87.6% of the total in the district (Northern Cape (South Africa). Department of Social Development, 2009:8).

Having discussed the geographic and demographic nature of the province, the local government structures in the Northern Cape will be outlined as the contested terrain for the election.

### **3.3.2 Contested terrain**

The province's local government bureaucracy is divided into five regions, each with its own district and local councils. There are no metro councils in the Northern Cape despite there being two reasonably sized cities (Kimberley and Upington) in comparison to other South African metropolises.

The Frances Baard District is the smallest in size, covering 3.4% of the province's territory. It is home to 40% of the provincial population and has the highest population density of 26.2 people per square kilometre, mainly due to the city of Kimberley. Local councils under the jurisdiction of the Frances Baard District Council are Sol Plaatje, which governs Kimberley, Magareng (Warrenton), Phokwane (Hartswater), and Dikgatlong (Barkley West).

The Siyanda District traverses the northern border of South Africa with parts stretching into the centre of the Northern Cape. It is home to 26% of the provincial population and covers roughly a third of the province's territory. Local councils under the jurisdiction of the

Siyanda District Council are Khara Heis, which governs Upington, Kai Garieb (Kakamas), !Kheis (Groblershoop), Mier (Askham), Tsantsabane (Posmasburg) and Kgatelopele (Danielskuil).

The Pixley ka Seme District is in the western arid region of South Africa and covers most of the Karoo portion in the south-east of the Northern Cape. It covers 28% of total provincial territory and is home to 20% of the total population. Local councils under the jurisdiction of the Pixley ka Seme District council are Emthanjeni, which governs the district capital of De Aar, Ubuntu (Victoria West), Umsobomvu (Colesberg), Kareeberg (Carnarvon), Renosterberg (Vanderkloof), Thembelihle (Hopetwon), Siyathemba (Prieska), and Siyancuma (Douglas).

The Namakwa District stretches along the country's Western Coastline and covers the territory traditionally known as Namaqualand, with a portion of the upper Karoo forming the southern section of this district. The district is inhabited by 13% of the provincial population and stretches a 1000km from Alexander Bay in the North West to Fraserburg in the south east. Local councils under the jurisdiction of the Namakwa District council are Nama Khoi, which governs the district capital of Springbok, Khai ma (Pofadder), Richtersveld (Port Nolloth), Kamiesberg (Garies), Hantam (Calvinia) and Karoo Hoogland (Williston).

Finally, the John Taole Gaetsewe (JTG - previously Kgalagadi) District is in the North East of the province and includes recently incorporated cross-border municipalities from the neighbouring North West province. Of the total provincial population, 4.5% live in JTG, the smallest proportion of all districts. Local councils in JTG are Ga Segonyana, which governs the district capital of Kuruman, Gamagara (Kathu) and Moshaweng (Mothibistad). The district is 98% rural (Northern Cape (South Africa). Department of Social Development, 2008:5-16).

Socio-economic conditions may vary according to municipality. This will be discussed in the following section.

### **3.3.3 Socio-economic conditions**

A distinct feature of the Northern Cape economy is its high unemployment rate. Trends for the 2009/10 financial period show the unemployment rate to be 27.8%, one of the highest in the country.

This proportion is based on government survey data, which defines the unemployed as those who had either searched for employment in the four weeks prior to the survey, or planned to do so at a definite date, and those who had not worked or were available for work during the survey period. The wide definition of unemployment, which includes discouraged work-seekers, puts the unemployment rate at 35.9% (StatsSA, 2010, cited in SAIRR, 2010:239).

Given that primary industries are the foundation of the Northern Cape economy, it is not surprising that the agricultural sector is one of the major sources of employment in the province. StatsSA found that a total of 74 745 people were employed in this sector in 2007. A majority of these people, 47 874, were classified as seasonal or casual employees.

Mining, once a major employer in many parts of the province, has steadily shrunk as a sector, employing just 9 000 people in 2010, down from 12 000 in 2009 (cited in SAIRR, 2010:212).

The Namakwa district, in particular, has been hard hit by the closure of a number of mines in the Nama Khoi municipality. There is still significant mining activity in the east of the province, however. This includes the eastern portion of the Siyanda district, Frances Baard district and parts of the John Taole Gaetsewe district (Wyngaard, 2010b).

Mine workers are unionized under Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) affiliates the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA). COSATU is an alliance partner of the incumbent ANC and the voting patterns of these workers and their families may be significantly influenced by this factor.

The underdevelopment of the tertiary sector in the province is evident in the size and scope of the manufacturing sector, employing just 11 000 people in 2010, down from 12 000 in 2009 (StatsSA, 2010).

The socio-economic pressures and heavy reliance amongst the electorate on state relief and intervention on a broad set of instances from social housing, to food and government employment schemes such as Public Works projects are formidable.

For example, consider that there is a total of 554 900 registered voters in the Northern Cape (IEC, 2009:23) and a total of 306 867 people receiving social grants in the province (Northern Cape Provincial Government, 2009:36).

There is a widely-reported concern by local activists that voters are apparently threatened by the incumbent party with the discontinuation of their social grants should they vote otherwise.

Regarding education, levels of schooling are generally low amongst the electorate as are literacy levels. There is a 45.48% illiteracy rate in the Pixley ka Seme district, being the highest of all districts (Northern Cape (South Africa). Department of Social Development, 2010:16), and 34.47% in the Namakwa district, being the lowest of all districts (Northern Cape (South Africa). Department of Social Development, 2009:18).

Low literacy levels have a bearing on the type of tactics used to contact the voter. Detailed information brochures, or flyers containing difficult words and long sentences, are not useful for conveying a campaign message appropriately to much of the targeted voters.

Regarding communication with the voter, due to low education levels, non-mother tongue campaign communication is likely to be less effective. There are three languages that are predominant in the Northern Cape. The coloured population overwhelmingly speak Afrikaans, and the Black population speak either seTswana or isiXhosa.

Afrikaans is generally the *lingua franca* in the west of the province while English is understood by many, especially in urban centres, but is rarely the language of choice. A general rule of thumb, however, is that English is a preferred substitute in the east of the province if the local indigenous language cannot be used (Kies, 2010a).

The legacy of Apartheid has also left the province with a clearly discernible and, at times ridiculous, landscape of clearly segregated neighbourhoods by race. Often it is just a matter of crossing the street to move from a coloured community to a black one.

White neighbourhoods are in many instances far removed from their darker-hued counterparts, a striking example being the resort town of Vanderkloof being separated by about three kilometres from a coloured-enclave tucked neatly away in a nearby *kloof*. Only in the larger centres such as Kimberley and Upington where a middle-class or mixed under-class has developed are neighbourhoods that are reasonably diverse evident.

The racial make-up of any area in a South African context has a significant impact on campaign planning, particularly in terms of messaging, due to the different political histories of racial groupings under the Apartheid regime and its impact on current political leanings (refer to section 3.6 for a detailed discussion on this).

Having analyzed the type of election and the context it will take place in, the viable parties contesting the ballot is discussed in the section to follow.

### **3.4 MAIN PARTIES CONTESTING THE BALLOT**

At the time of the 2011 Municipal Elections, support in the Northern Cape was consolidated around three main parties: the Congress of the People (COPE), the Democratic Alliance (DA) and the African National Congress (ANC). In this section a general orientation on each of these parties is provided.

#### **3.4.1 The Congress of the People**

The Congress of the People (COPE) is the political organization on which the campaign planning in this study is based. The genesis of the party in the Northern Cape was in the aftermath of the African National Congress' Moshaweng (a municipality in the John Taole Gaetsewe district) conference, for the purpose of electing provincial leadership ahead of the fateful national congress from which Jacob Zuma emerged as ANC president in Polokwane in December 2007 (Butler, 2009:71-72).

Moshaweng was preceded by a series of chaotic and at times violent regional elective conferences as ANC factions jostled for control of their regional leadership structures and positions (Tabane and Ludman, 2009:5).

The chaos spread into the administrative and governance interfaces of municipalities where party deployees held positions of influence, at times affecting the day-to-day running of councils and the delivery of services to the public (Heyns, 2008).

The disgruntlement among members of Thabo Mbeki's faction of the ANC in the Northern Cape after what they claim was a crooked ballot led to their ousting from leadership positions in Moshaweng, fed into Mosiuoa "Terror" Lekota's plans nationally to unite similarly unhappy Mbeki-aligned ANC members in other provinces under a new party and banner (Mchlauli, 2010).

After a national convention in Sandton in November 2008, addressed by Mbhazima Shilowa and Lekota amongst other prominent opposition leaders, the path toward a new opposition party, later to be registered with the IEC as COPE, had become clear.

The Sandton Declaration, made at the end of the three day conference, summarized the aspirations of the delegates as follows: to uphold the supremacy of the constitution, build social cohesion based on the values "we can all defend", freedom and equality before the law, and participatory democracy (Anon, 2008).

In December 2008, the party held an inaugural conference to elect leadership "by consensus" in Bloemfontein. Lekota would lead the party and Shilowa would be his deputy. High-profile leaders of the past, such as Alan Boesak, also joined the party (Rossouw and Mataboge, 2008).

In the Northern Cape, the party attracted a mix of former white nationalists and coloured leaders from the Democratic Alliance (DA) and Independent Democrats (ID) to add to its base of predominantly ANC defectors. The first action of ANC defectors who held councillor positions in municipalities was to resign and force a by-election.

Overall, 16 such by-elections were held across the province, stretching from the time before the party even had a name (candidates contested as independents), to early March of 2009,

just three months before the 2009 National and provincial elections. The fledgling party won just two of these by-elections, one in Louisvale in the Khara Heis local council and one in Groblershoop in the Kheis local council (Mchlauli, 2010).

The organizational structure of COPE very closely follows the ANC's mass-party model. Local structures are built by signing up members for the party and officially launching a local branch when membership reaches 25 within a particular voting district (COPE, 2008:32). Like the ANC, women, youth and elders structures form semi-autonomous parts of the mother body.

When sufficient branches are built within a district council territory the party holds a conference to elect regional leadership. Once regional conferences have been held, a provincial conference is called to elect provincial leadership and so forth up until national level.

At all levels, leadership is composed of a top five: a chairperson who is the political head, a secretary, as the administrative head, deputies for the aforementioned positions and a Treasurer. This leadership cohort is complemented by a number of additional members, depending on the structure, with some assigned a specific portfolio such as policy or communication (COPE, 2008:20-23).

In theory, branches act as the party's representation in communities, carrying out the programmes of the organization and attempting to resolve community concerns. Branch, regional and provincial structures are converted into election coordinating committees prior to the campaign, as are regions and the province.

COPE's 2009 electoral campaign was planned and run in the space of four months between the inaugural conference of the party on Reconciliation Day on 16 December 2008, and Election Day on 27 April 2009 (Le Roux, 2010:69-81).

As a result of the momentum gained by the party's launch as an entity, the party achieved what could be termed a disproportionate amount of media coverage - 17%, ahead of the DA's 11% and behind the ANC's 45% (Media Monitoring Africa, 2009).

The party failed, however, to run a well-conceived campaign due to a number of internal and external factors, including the lack of a professional campaign organization and limited funding. As Booysen (2009:94) notes: “the campaign was so very low-key that the fact that COPE was not pulling off high-profile campaigning was as newsworthy as the details of some other parties’ actual campaigns”.

The party’s campaign message had centred around the concepts of “change” and “hope”. There was also a strong theme of defending the constitution against what the party perceived as a hegemonic ANC, evident in the campaign slogan: “in defence of democracy” (COPE, 2009:1).

Michiel le Roux, a volunteer who worked in the national campaign headquarters during this period, describes the disorganization of the planning and coordinating process as a “combination of incompetence and gate-keeping” due to the insecurity of people in their new political home and the lack of a clear distinction in the campaign organization between professionals and politicians (2010:50).

Regardless of the haphazard campaign, the party managed to unseat the DA and become the official opposition in the province, with 17% of the provincial ballot vote or 5 seats in the provincial legislature. Elsewhere, the party achieved official opposition status in four other provinces and representation in all legislatures, as well as 30 seats in the National Assembly, drawing a total of 1.3 million voters to its cause (Booyesen, 2009:106-108).

Neville Mompoti, former ANC provincial secretary, who had been campaigning for another term ahead of Moshaweng, was selected to lead the new official opposition in the Northern Cape provincial legislature. Former ANC organizer Bella Matthys, being selected by the party to be its administrative head, or whip.

The three remaining seats were occupied by Fred Wyngaard, former ANC deputy chairperson and the interim provincial chairperson of COPE; Juanita Mabilu, former mayor of the Ga Segonyana council; and Pakes Dikgetsi, another high-profile ANC leader who had resigned from his MEC for Finance a few months prior to the campaign.

Having won itself representation in government, the party now had access to state funding for its parliamentary constituency and political activities, made possible by the Northern Cape Political Party Fund Act (Northern Cape (South Africa), 2009). Constituency offices were opened in the province's larger and strategic centres such as Kimberley, De Aar, Springbok and Upington for the purpose of working with community's to resolve their concerns through the legislature.

The party's political mandate in the province was to build branches on a voting district basis, leading toward conferences to elect regional and provincial leadership. In total 244 branches were built and audited after the five regional conferences had been concluded. On 16 October 2010, the party held its first provincial conference.

The branch delegates elected Wyngaard, a coloured leader with a long history in local government and union activity in Namaqualand, as the provincial chairperson; Fezile Kies, a former ANC organizer as its secretary, and Matthys, Mabilu and Lemfvia van Niekerk, a former National Party (NP) leader, in the remainder of the top five positions.

The level of progress made in building the party in the province was not reflected on a national level. A bitter rivalry between the party's Deputy President, Shilowa, and President, Lekota, had become so aggravated that the party had all but been torn asunder into two factions. The events which characterized Shilowa and Lekota's factional battles have severely damaged the party's public image and led to a series of resignations from high-profile party (refer to Chapter 5, section 5.2.2 for a detailed discussion on this).

It was in a context of provincial fortitude amidst a national leadership and organizational disaster that COPE faced with the prospect of a municipal election campaign. Failure to consolidate and improve upon the gains made in the 2009 elections posed a serious threat to the party's future success in the Northern Cape and position of official opposition.

Based on 2009 election results there were prospects for the party to be represented at a local council level for the first time, and indeed to govern certain councils where the debut performance looked particularly promising. A mathematical approach to the setting of the party's objectives for the 2011 campaign is undertaken in Chapter four (refer to section 4.2).

One of the key considerations in setting objectives for the 2011 campaign was the state of COPE's finances provincially. Financial statements tabled at the party's provincial conference in October 2010, show that in its first year as the official opposition, ended 31 March 2010, COPE had saved just R315 773 out of the R1.8 million total legislated state funding it received for party activity (Van Niekerk, 2011).

While an exact campaign budget was not available for the purposes of this study, nor was the drawing up of a campaign budget within its limits, it was clear from the lack of savings that party would go into the 2011 election with an estimated maximum campaign budget of just over R2 million, given that the party would receive its next annual allowance at the start of the new financial year before the election. This estimate was assuming the party received no money from its national structure or money from donors in the various Northern Cape municipalities.

It was clear from this situation that the communication strategy recommended for COPE, would need to take into account the need to generate maximum gains for the party in the election while competing against well-funded opponents on a shoe-string budget.

For its national campaign message, COPE continued the use of the concept of "change" that it punted in the 2009 election, this time going for the twin slogans of "the time for change is now" and "your partner for real change". The 2011 message focused on involving communities in development through partnerships, as a solution to the "state of crisis" local government is in under the ANC due to "incapable management and corruption" (COPE, 2011:1-3).

A key theme in the party's messaging was public participation in local governance. The party perceived a disconnection between municipalities and the public, evident in the dissatisfaction with local service delivery. This was to be resolved through increasing the accountability of local councils. Communities must become "the drivers of positive change" through participation in partnership structures such as road and hospital boards, IDP forums and ward committees (COPE, 2011:5-6).

### 3.4.2 The Democratic Alliance

The Democratic Alliance (DA) has its roots in the white Progressive Federal Party which, under the leadership of Helen Suzman, occupied a single seat in parliament for the duration of the Apartheid regime and actively campaigned against its discriminatory laws, albeit with compromises that former leader Tony Leon described as temporizing “core convictions to stay in business” (2008:42).

In 1994, the party had transformed into the Democratic Party (DP), winning a humble five seats in parliament under the leadership of Colin Eglin. By 1999 and under the leadership of Leon, the party had successfully overtaken the National Party as the official opposition in South Africa through the controversial “Fight back” campaign that saw the party branded as “Fighting black” by the ANC and commentators (Leon, 2008:500).

In the 2000 Local Government Elections, an alliance with the now New National Party (NNP) and Louis Luyt’s Federal Party (FP) saw the first rebranding of the DP as it took on its current name of the Democratic Alliance (Booyesen, 2004:133).

The Alliance was a success in the Northern Cape where many coloured voters were still politically-aligned to the NP. Majorities were won in a number of councils as the party basically went head-to-head as the only viable opponent to the ANC. The Alliance was not to last, however. The NNP split to eventually form an alliance with the ANC, something Christie van der Westhuizen termed “African nationalism absorbing Afrikaner nationalism (2007:276-284).

Given that legislation allowed for elected councillors to “cross the floor” and join an opposing party was still in existence at the time, the DA lost many of the councils it had won in the Northern Cape and elsewhere due to the defection of NNP-affiliated councillors to the ANC (IEC, 2002).

By 2004, when it was almost certain that the NNP would dissolve into an ANC-led government through mutual agreement after the national elections, the DA had lost much ground in the Northern Cape due to most voters having no traditional affiliation to the

former-DP partners who remained under the banner. The ANC gained ground and a significant political space was opened up in localities with coloured-dominated areas electorates, where the NNP formerly held sway, for the Independent Democrats (ID) to win some support in its debut election (refer to section 3.6.1 for a detailed discussion on this).

The ID, a party led by former PAC leader and prominent coloured politician, Patricia De Lille, again proved to be reasonably popular among these swing voters in the western reaches of the province, namely Namakwaland and parts of the Green Kalahari, now the Siyanda and Namakwa districts.

In other parts of the country, the DA remained popular among white and coloured voters, notably benefitting from the unique demographics of the Western Cape to win the strategically important Metro Council of Cape Town from the ANC in the 2006 Municipal Elections. Now under the leadership of Helen Zille, a white woman who became the mayor of Cape Town, the party would have its first shot at governing (Powell, 2006).

The level of success was not achieved in the Northern Cape, however, as the ANC won every single local council, probably due to many opposition voters being left homeless after the political realignments of the past few years in the province joining the ranks of ANC supporters or simply staying at home.

The DA attempted to rebrand once again with a new national flag themed logo and a toning down of the angry rhetoric of the Leon-era. By 2009 its intentions to expand its support into the ANC's traditional black voter base were clear under the campaign slogan of "One Nation, One Future" (Jolobe, 2009:138-139).

The DA's organizational structure closely resembles the administration of a large corporate. The party has a CEO and various departments such as Operations and Support Services. By comparison to other opposition parties, the strong political-administrative interface evident in the DA makes it easier for the party to run its operations professionally and efficiently.

Where politics meets administration is in the National Management Committee which oversees the day to day running of the party and consists of its national leader, parliamentary leader and other top officials (DA, 2010:37-38). Besides its national

leadership, the party has a federal chairperson, a federal executive and a federal council which is made up of provincial leaders and is the party's highest decision-making body (DA, 2010:20).

The concept of branches also forms part of the organizational structure. At grassroots, the party relies heavily on constituency managers, who act as professional organizers and basically run their operations out of the boots of their cars as the party does not believe in having fixed premises (DA, 2011b).

The 2009 election saw the DA take over the Western Cape province with a majority of 51.4%, and increase its national share of the vote to 16.7% from 12.4% in 2004, including an increase in the Northern Cape despite being overtaken by COPE at the polls (Jolobe, 2009:131).

The DA had at that time won significant coloured support in the Western Cape, but only in isolated instances in the Northern Cape, with COPE, the ID and the ANC accounting for the support of the majority of coloured voters (refer to section 3.6.2). The party, nevertheless, managed four seats in the provincial legislature in comparison to the ID's two.

A lingering problem for the DA has been to overcome the perception that it is a party for whites and led by whites. There were two steps prior to the 2011 elections the party took to address this problem in the Northern Cape.

First, was the merger with the ID by allowing dual membership between the parties. Both parties would contest the 2011 election under the DA banner and elected councillors would officially be DA-aligned, effectively completing the merger at a local level (Chelemu, 2010).

Due to the repeal of floor-crossing legislation, the ID must exist as a separate entity until the next National and Provincial Elections in 2014, or lose its seats in parliament. The parties skirted this issue through the dual membership adaptation to their respective constitutions (DA, 2010:17).

ID leader Patricia De Lille resigned from her post as the party's leader in the National Assembly to take up the MEC for Social Development post in Zille's Western Cape cabinet.

De Lille was then presented as the DA's candidate for the mayorship for the 2011 election (Underhill, 2011).

Secondly, the party's leader in the Northern Cape legislature, Dirk Stubbe, was redeployed to national parliament to make way for the party's provincial leader, Andrew Louw, to take over.

The move was in all likelihood made for the purpose of popularizing the coloured Louw ahead of the 2011 election. Louw joined the party's other three MPL's in the provincial legislature: Gerda Moolman, a former councillor in the Renosterberg municipality; Karen de Kock, who joined the party shortly before the 2009 election after a background in NGO work; and Allen Grootboom, a former schoolteacher and poet.

The DA would attempt to consolidate its merger with the ID through its 2011 election campaign and would, it appeared prior to the election, seek to woo disillusioned COPE voters in an attempt to regain momentum in the province.

The DA focused its message on its track record as a party who governs in 18 of the country's 284 municipalities. It will seek to compare this record with that of the ANC. The party's message in a nutshell is: "Where the DA governs, service delivery is better for all".

The message had the potential to put the ANC on the defensive as, by the measure of the ANC government's own audits of municipalities, the DA would attempt to highlight that DA-governed municipalities were consistently rated as some of the top performers in the country (DA, 2011a).

To convey the message, the DA would make constant comparison between the ANC's performance in government and its own.

### **3.4.3 The African National Congress**

Prior to the 2011 elections, the ANC governed the Northern Cape, all other provinces excluding the Western Cape, and the country. The party also governed all 27 local councils and the five district councils in the Northern Cape after a clean sweep in the 2006 Municipal Elections. It is the party of liberation and the first democratically-elected government in the 1994 National and Provincial Elections. It still described itself as a “liberation movement” rather than an ordinary political party (ANC, 2010).

The ANC has governed South Africa since 1994, with the first administration being under the leadership of Nelson Mandela with a majority of 62.6% (1994-1999), and the second and third under Thabo Mbeki (1999-2008), with a majority of 66.4% in 1999 and 69.7% in 2004 (Lodge, 2006:109-126). After Mbeki was recalled, the ANC deployed Kgalema Motlante to the presidency for a brief period (2008-2009), until Jacob Zuma was elected with a 66% majority in 2009 (Butler, 2009:65-80).

While Mandela is widely considered across all demographics to be the nation’s darling and its father, the current president Jacob Zuma elicits a far more mixed public opinion. TNS Research polls pin his approval rating at 49% for November 2010, down from 58% at the end of 2009. Zuma is a controversial figure, elected in 2009 after a controversial decision by the National Prosecuting Agency (NPA) to drop 783 counts of corruption charges against him (Jeffery, 2010:14).

Zuma consistently has come under attack for his polygamous lifestyle and four wives (Phillips, 2010). Zuma also faced rape charges in 2007, which were thrown out of court (Jeffery, 2010:68). Controversially, he fathered a child out of wedlock with long-time friend Irvin Khoza and without the consent of his wives (Govender, 2010).

The party draws the overwhelming bulk of its support from the black middle and working classes. In the Northern Cape, the party commands its strongest support base in the predominantly black township of Galeshewe in Kimberley and in other parts of the Frances Baard and the rural John Taole Gaetsewe districts.

The party’s organizational structure is mass-based and includes branch, regional and provincial leadership tiers that operate in the same way as COPE (refer to section 3.4.1). The ANC is also one partner in a tripartite alliance with the 2 million-member claimed Congress

of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) which ensures that civil servants especially, take to the streets at election time to campaign for the ANC. The South African Communist Party (SACP) is the third member of the alliance but is not registered to contest elections as a political party.

The alliance lends legitimacy to the ANC as the party of the poor and labour. Internal debates are often robust to the extent that media are consistently pushed into a frenzy of speculation about whether the alliance will hold. "Tensions" as it is often termed, were pushed to the limit in the last quarter of 2010 when 1.3 million public servants went on a COSATU-organized strike. It was speculated to be the largest democratic South Africa has ever seen (Ndlovu, Mbabela and SAPA, 2010).

The party also has affiliate structures to the mother body in the form of the ANC Youth League, led prior to the 2011 elections by the controversial Julius Malema. Malema emboldened Afrikaner civil organizations to accuse him of genocide due to his singing of a struggle song which translates as "shoot the boer" in a climate of what is perceived by them to be a sustained and systematic murder of white farmers (SAPA, 2010).

The ANC Women's League, led by Angie Motshekga, the Minister of Education is another affiliate, as is the South African Students Congress (SASCO) which organizes youth in higher education, the Congress of South African Students, which organizes secondary school learners, and the South African National Civic Organization (SANCO) which is a community-based NGO style affiliate.

The guiding document of the alliance is the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) which highlights the dual identity of political party and liberation movement. According to Susan Jeffreys the NDR does not nearly get enough media attention given its hegemonic ideals. She cites this passage by Joel Netshitenze in the ANC journal *Umrabulo*, in 1998:

*"Transformation of the state entails, first and foremost, extending the power of the National Liberation Movement [the ANC] over all levers of power: the army, the police, the bureaucracy, intelligence, structures, the judiciary, parastatals, and agencies such as regulatory bodies, the public broadcaster, the central bank, and so on."*

(cited in Jeffrey, 2010:41)

In the Northern Cape the party is led by its Chairperson, John Block who is currently standing trial for influencing state tenders worth R450 million. The provincial secretary is Zamani Saul and the Premier of the province is Hazel Jenkins, a woman whose appointment raised speculation that it was a move to placate an unreliable coloured electorate.

Secretary General, Gwede Mantashe, revealed in his state of the organization address at the party's 2010 National General Council (NGC) that there are 105 ANC branches in good standing (membership fees paid up and a functional branch executive) in the province. This is a decline from 162 in 2007. The party works on one branch per ward and given that the new demarcations have resulted in 197 wards in the Northern Cape. Branches are responsible for canvassing voters during election campaigns.

Party membership has also declined by 140 from 37 262 in December 2007, to 37 122 in September 2010. This is despite a concerted drive for 1 million members countrywide by the party's centenary in 2012 under the slogan "Every supporter a member", and a target of 90 000 members set for the Northern Cape (Mantashe, 2010).

The party's seasoned campaign organization for the 2011 elections was likely to include a cohort of seasoned campaigners who are issued with training literature for volunteers and candidates to guide the party machinery in its campaigning. In 2009 for instance, the party ensured that "branches were revitalized" and "relied heavily upon large numbers of volunteers to undertake door-to-door canvassing" (Butler, 2009:65).

The party made use of professional consultants for polling and message design at national level. For 2011, the party announced it would use Blueprint Strategic Marketing Communications as its ad agency for print, online and radio advertisements (Mthembu, 2011).

As a well-funded incumbent in all municipalities, the ANC set itself the objective of contesting and retaining all local and district councils in 2011. For its message, the ANC built on the slogan of "working together", used in its 2009 campaign, by tailoring it toward the party's record as an incumbent in local government. The message is simple: "Working together we have achieved much, but there is still more to be done" (ANC, 2011:1).

To promote its track record, the ANC used statistics showing the rollout of basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity to communities since 1994. The party also credits itself with the establishment of post-Apartheid local governance structures, stating that “together, we have worked hard to build democratic local government that gives communities a voice and the opportunity to be active participants in the development of areas where they live”.

The ANC downplayed its failures as an incumbent by, firstly, acknowledging the problem and, secondly, portraying it as limited: “Whilst many local authorities are doing excellent work we recognise that some are not performing well.” As an experienced party of government, the ANC promised to “work together” with the public to address the shortcomings of local government in order to “build better communities” (ANC, 2011:2-4).

### **3.5 THE MEDIA**

With the exception of the largest urban centre of Kimberley, the Northern Cape population is offered very little choice in terms of media. This in turn leaves the campaign with limited means of communicating to voters on a mass scale. The various forms of community, commercial and other media are discussed in this section.

#### **3.5.1 Community media**

Community media are often small operations focusing on localized content for a limited geographical area. In the Northern Cape, community media forms the bulk of what is on offer for the public to consume. The main radio and print forms of this media available in the province are discussed below.

### 3.5.1.1 *Community radio*

There were six community radio stations currently operating within the province's borders prior to the 2011 elections. Radio NFM 98.1 broadcasts to most of the Namakwa district, reaching voters in four of its six local councils: Khai ma, Richtersveld, Nama Khoi and Kamiesberg.

The total registered voting population in these four councils is 46 200, according to 2009 IEC election registration figures. The station is not registered for Radio Market Share (RAMS) monitoring with the South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF), which measures listenership over a seven day period. The station, nevertheless, claims in its advertising brochure to reach 84 000 people from Keetmanshoop in Namibia to Garies, south of Springbok. It broadcasts primarily in Afrikaans but also in English and Xhosa during specified time slots (NFM 98.1, 2010).

Radio Kaboesna is an Afrikaans-language station based in Calvinia and reaches voters in the Hantam local council, as well those who live in Williston, one of three towns in the neighbouring council of Karoo Hoogland. The station had a seven day listenership of 12 000 in February 2011 according to RAMS figures (SAARF, 2011). The Hantam local council and the town of Williston combined accounted for 13 041 registered voters in 2009.

Radio Riverside broadcasts to Upington and surrounding villages, reaching voters in the Khara Heis local council. The station had a seven day listenership of 56 000 according to RAMS figures for February 2011 (SAARF, 2011). The language of broadcast is primarily Afrikaans with significant amounts of English and Xhosa also spoken. Registered voters residing in the municipality amounted to 44 126 in 2009.

Radio Teemaneng broadcasts from Kimberley and reaches voters in the Sol Plaatje local council, which governs the city and surrounding villages. The station broadcasts primarily in English with Afrikaans and seTswana shows airing in specified time slots. RAMS figures for February 2011 indicate a seven day listenership of 83 000 (SAARF, 2011). The Sol Plaatje

municipality is the largest in the province with voter registration standing at 119 393 at the time of the 2009 election.

Ulwazi fm is based in De Aar and reaches voters in the Emthanjeni local council. The station's RAMS figures rapidly picked up during the period February 2010 – 2011: 1 000 to 57 000 past seven day listeners (SAARF, 2011). The municipality had 22 029 registered voters living within its borders in 2009.

Community radio in the John Taole Gaetsewe district comes in the form of VaalTar fm, based in a nearby North West town. The station was newly launched at the time of writing with no RAMS statistics available.

Finally, there is Radio Magareng which is a new station based in Warrenton that broadcasts to voters living in the Magareng local council, comprising 11 738 registered voters. The station is relatively new and RAMS figures are not yet available for it.

### 3.5.1.2 *Community print*

The Namakwa district is serviced by a number of community newspapers, all published in Afrikaans. The Plattelander, Namakwalander and Rooihantjie are circulated in four local councils in the district. There is potential for earned media in these papers as all are willing to print multiple press releases, verbatim and in full, in a single edition (Newman, 2011a).

The Noordwester is an Afrikaans-language weekly that services the southern portion of Namakwaland and covers the councils of Hantam and Karoo Hoogland. The paper's editor regularly writes editorials supportive of the DA and gives the party significant space on its pages to convey messages to voters (Newman, 2011a). There is nevertheless a willingness to publish press releases from COPE.

Media24 publishes a number of free newspapers that circulate in the eastern belt of the province, encompassing the Frances Baard and John Taolo Gaetsewe districts. There is no potential for earned media in these publications as they do not carry party political news.

Upington and its surrounding towns are serviced by the Afrikaans-language weekly, *Die Gemsbok*, while De Aar and surrounding towns are serviced by the bi-lingual (Afrikaans and English) weekly, *The Echo*. Again, these papers do not carry party political news and press releases so there is little scope for earned media.

The *Kathu Gazette* is a bilingual (Afrikaans and English) weekly community newspaper that is circulated in mining towns, mainly in the eastern half of the province: Dingleton, Kathu, Kuruman and Deben amongst other smaller villages. The paper also has limited distribution in Upington. There is some potential for earned media as the paper has shown willingness to publish COPE releases, particularly if the topic concerns issues or campaigning in the papers distribution footprint.

*Die Ghaap*, is a bilingual (English and Afrikaans) community print publication circulated in the Siyancuma, Thembilihle and Siyathemba local councils. The paper carries political news with enthusiasm (Saayman, 2010a).

There are no newspapers published in Xhosa in circulation in the province. A relatively newly established bilingual weekly (English and seTswana), *Motsosa Kgang*, circulates in the John Taole Gaetsewe district. The paper is regularly publishes articles and opinion pieces critical of the incumbent ANC, especially for the Phokwane municipality (Jan Kempsterdorp, Hartswater and Pampierstad). There is potential for the publishing of press releases relevant to the circulation area given the hard news focus of the paper.

### **3.5.2 Commercial media**

Commercial media, newspapers or radio stations owned by large corporations for the purpose of profit-making, is less prevalent in the rural Northern Cape in comparison to other more developed and densely populated provinces such as Gauteng, Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Western Cape. While there is some choice in titles for newspaper readers, there is almost no choice for radio listeners as will be discussed below.

### 3.5.2.1 Commercial radio

Radio stations run by the public broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), are the only form of commercial radio available in the province. Three stations, with large broadcasting footprints, cater for the major language groups in the province and can be considered to be the most influential in the absence of other commercial radio stations.

*Motsweding*, which is popular in the predominantly seTswana-speaking east of the province including the eastern parts of the Pixley ka Seme and Siyanda districts, as well as the Frances Baard and John Taole Gaetsewe districts. *Umhlobo Wenene* is popular in the Xhosa-speaking parts of the Pixley ka Seme and Siyanda districts. *Radio Sonder Grense* has the largest broadcasting footprint in the province and caters for Afrikaans listeners. All three stations are primarily talk, with music played during specified time slots (SABC, 2010).

Two English-language radio stations, Radio 2000 and SAFM, can also be heard in selected parts of the province, although they cater to none of the dominant language groups residing there. Radio 2000 is a contemporary music station with elements of talk radio, while SAFM is primarily a news service and talk station.

There are no RAMS figures available for the Northern Cape exclusively for SABC stations. It can be assumed, though, that due to limited choice and poverty preventing the ownership of a television for many, the stations enjoy a monopoly on listenership in most areas, with only the odd community station to compete against.

There is potential for earned media as the public broadcaster is constitutionally mandated to cover elections adequately, which includes news and debate. Advertising on these stations is made somewhat more affordable through the option of “ad-splits” which allows advertisements to be broadcast to a select province at a lower rate as opposed to each of the station’s total national footprint (SABC, 2010).

Two further commercial stations also run by the SABC, 5fm and Metrofm, can be heard in Kimberley and other cities across the country. The city is the only place in the province where these two stations can be heard and ad-split options for reaching voters only in this area are not available.

### 3.5.2.2 *Commercial print*

In terms of commercial print media, the province can be considered to be a case of two halves: the east and the west. Media 24's central South African title, Die Volksblad, printed in Bloemfontein, distributes a Northern Cape version of its newspaper as far west as Kakamas in the Siyanda district, effectively excluding the entire Namakwa district from its distribution.

Advertising rates are high due to the lack of an option to advertise in either the Northern Cape or Free State versions. Potential for earned media is high as press releases are generally successfully published, from experience.

In Kimberley, Independent Newspapers circulates the Diamond Fields Advertiser, an English-language daily with a specific focus on provincial and Kimberley-oriented news. Towns as far east of Kimberley as De Aar also receive the paper, albeit in small quantities and a day late. The newspaper claims a readership of 58 000 according to its advertising brochure (DFA, 2010). There is much potential for earned media and, from experience, an almost 100% success rate of getting COPE press releases published.

The Daily Sun, a national tabloid newspaper targeting working class readers, is circulated in Kimberley. Other national dailies circulated in the city are the English titles The Citizen, the New Age and the Sowetan.

The west of the province, by proximity, is serviced by titles based in the Western Cape. Die Son, an Afrikaans *ponie koerant* (tabloid newspaper) circulates on weekdays in Namakwa and the western parts of Pixley ka Seme and Siyanda districts.

Die Burger, also an Afrikaans daily, circulates in the Namakwa, Siyanda and Pixley ka Seme districts, as far east as Victoria West. Advertising rates are high due to the papers' circulation footprint extending across the province's borders. The potential for earned media is minimal given the distinct focus on Western Cape news.

Weekly newspapers such as the Mail and Guardian, City Press, Rapport, Sunday Times and Sunday Independent are circulated in larger centres in each of the Northern Cape's five districts. All titles have national footprints, making advertising rates expensive and wasteful due to the sheer number of non-targeted voters being reached.

### **3.5.3 Television**

Most of the province's residents cannot afford satellite television and are therefore dependent on the SABC for their news and entertainment. SABC 2 caters for Afrikaans and seTswana speakers and SABC 1 caters for the province's Xhosa speakers. SABC 3 and the privately-owned free-to-air station, ETV, broadcast in English.

There is some potential for earned media on television due to the SABC having a news bureau based in Kimberley and the broadcaster's legislated mandate to give fair and equitable elections coverage to contesting parties.

From experience, however, Northern Cape news rarely makes the main evening news bulletins and even less so if the news relates to COPE's provincial activities. It was unlikely prior to the 2011 election that COPE would run any advertisements on national television given the precarious financial position of the party at the time.

### **3.5.4 Other media**

There are a smattering of billboards and lamp-pole advertising opportunities, located mainly in the province's larger centres of Upington, Kimberley and De Aar (Brand IQ, 2011; Continental Outdoor Media, 2011). There are also billboards in the smaller centres of Hartswater and Pampierstad, both in the Phokwane local council, and Kenhardt, in the Kai Garieb local council (Continental Outdoor Media, 2011).

The internet and social networking sites are not influential in most of the rural, impoverished Northern Cape due to the socio-economic conditions in the province and low levels of connectivity.

In this section, the various media available for a campaign to use to reach voters in the Northern Cape at the time of the 2011 election were discussed. In the section to follow, the political affiliations of voters and trends in voting for past elections in the province will be analyzed.

### **3.6 PAST ELECTIONS IN THE PROVINCE**

In this section, the past election results in the Northern Cape are considered for the purpose of understanding the balance of support for the viable contesting parties in the province. Results from the national ballot are considered for the four national elections that have taken place since 1994. The province's results are presented against those of the Western Cape to provide some perspective through comparison with the political dynamics of a province with similar demographics.

Besides both provinces having majority coloured populations, the political histories of the territories are intertwined with the Northern Cape only being proclaimed a separate province at the onset of democracy in 1994. The 2009 election result for the provincial ballot in the Northern Cape, the only available election to assess COPE's past performance, is then discussed in detail.

### 3.6.1 National election results 1994 – 2009

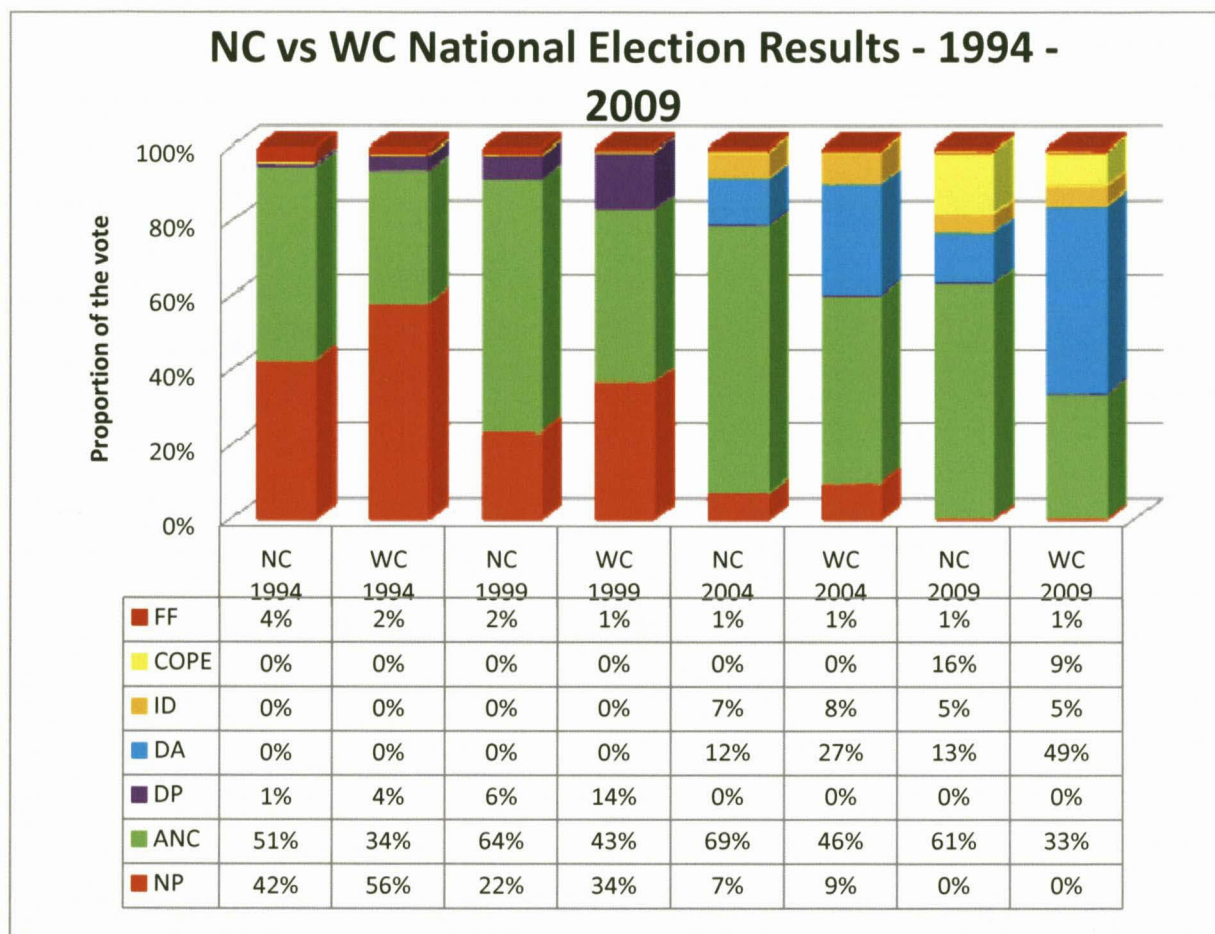


Table 3.6.2 Northern Cape versus Western Cape – National Election Results 1994 - 2009

The ANC won exactly half of the seats in the Northern Cape’s provincial legislature in the 1994 election. A majority was nevertheless achieved by the ANC through negotiations with the Freedom Front Plus and the subsequent awarding of the Speaker’s position in the provincial legislature to the Democratic Party in exchange for setting up a governing coalition. National Party elements were also absorbed into the cabinet.

(Wyngaard, 2011a).

The significantly higher proportion of the vote for the ANC in the Northern Cape when compared to the neighbouring Western Cape, can possibly be attributed to the former’s comparatively larger black proportion of the population, located primarily in the east of the

Northern Cape. The support of black voters at the time was consolidated under the ANC, as was the case in the rest of South Africa.

Given that white voters form just 10.3% of the provincial electorate (refer to section 3.3.1), it is clear from the National Party's (NP) 42% share of the vote in 1994 that the majority of its support came from coloured communities.

Being the former incumbent party during the Apartheid years, the NP's support was mobilized by its grassroots structures in these communities established during the days of the Tricameral parliament - a legislature which sought to give coloureds and other marginalized groups limited representation in government during Apartheid.

The coloured Labour Party, which participated in the Tricameral parliament, was instrumental in mobilizing votes for the NP as many of its leaders elected to campaign under the latter's banner. In contrast, ANC local structures were concentrated in black communities as was the case in the Western Cape as well (Eldridge & Seekings, 1996; Wyngaard, 2011a).

Many coloured voters were suspicious of the intentions of the ANC at the time. The party was a largely unknown entity in their communities and many feared the loss of the privileges the NP government had granted coloureds living in the Cape province before it was divided into the Western and Northern Capes in 1994.

Besides the attempted co-option of coloureds into Apartheid governance structures mentioned above, the Cape was declared a Coloured Labour Preference Zone which favoured the working-class in terms of employment on mines, farms and factories (Wyngaard, 2011a). Perceived to primarily be representative of blacks, the ANC struggled to win the confidence of these people in 1994.

However, NP support declined significantly in both provinces between 1994 and 1999. The rise in ANC support in the coloured-dominated west of the Northern Cape was the result of a multi-pronged strategy.

Firstly, labour was lobbied to rally behind the ANC through the ANC-affiliated COSATU. A problem existed in that workers would often accede to joining a union but still be firmly NP in their voting choice.

From the period prior to 1994 until about the mid-90's, young working-class coloured activists were deployed mainly from the Western Cape to unionize the Namakwa district, factory-floor by factory-floor. The federation was able to build considerable influence due to the dominance of the mining and agricultural industries in the Northern Cape.

Coloured union leaders, including COPE's provincial chairperson, Fred Wyngaard, were co-opted from COSATU by the ANC into the party's provincial leadership structures. These leaders were then deployed as public representatives at local government level in the wake of the 1995 local government elections. (Wyngaard, 2011a).

Secondly, the first local elections were also an opportunity for the ANC to field well-known community leaders to stand as its candidates for local office, thereby endearing the party to a suspicious coloured voter in the Northern Cape. This was also partly the reason for the swing toward the ANC from the NP in many small towns in the Western Cape in the same election (Eldridge & Seekings, 1996).

Thirdly, having made these deployments, the ANC in the Northern Cape then sought to win over coloured voters through a considerable effort to deliver basic services to coloured communities at a provincial and local level, something which the NP could not match due to its status as an opposition party in the province (Wyngaard, 2011a). This element of the strategy was not possible for the ANC in the Western Cape as it was not the incumbent party at the time.

Whereas the ANC's strategy succeeded in weakening the NP and increasing its share of the vote to an outright majority of 64% in the Northern Cape, the NP's loss of support in the Western Cape was mitigated by a growth in the Democratic Party's (DP) vote fuelled mainly by a white liberal English minority vote (Eldridge & Seekings, 1996). As a result, the

opposition were able to form a coalition government that would hold onto the Western Cape for a further five years.

In contrast to the Western Cape, the ANC was able to continue its strategy of delivering services to coloureds in the Northern Cape through its position in government, thereby growing its support while still maintaining a firm hold on its traditional black constituency through the same strategy and the absence of opposition parties that appealed to the black voter.

In the interim between the 1999 and 2004 elections, the DP and the NP coalition government in the Western Cape led the parties to merge nationally as the Democratic Alliance nationally for the 2000 local government elections. The alliance was a success in the Northern Cape with a significant number of local councils being won by the opposition.

The DA in its current form would not last, however. Mistrust and conflict within the party, based on a desire to gain control of the alliance by both DA and NP elements, eventually led to its disbandment. The NP then turned to its last remaining option for a partner: the ANC. Mosiuoa Lekota, then the ANC's National Chairperson who would later become the President of COPE, was tasked with the negotiations (Van der Westhuizen, 2007:280).

By 2004, the ANC had successfully negotiated a partnership with a, by then terminal, New National Party (NNP). The NNP campaigned as the party that would form part of an ANC government, thus carrying the concerns of its voters directly to decision-makers in the province's bureaucracy. As a result the NNP lost further support among coloured voters, some of whom capitulated to vote for the ANC.

Others who were still formerly oriented toward opposition politics voted for the newly-formed Independent Democrats, led by Patricia de Lille. The ID won the votes of a total of 7% of the provincial electorate through significant support in the less populous west of the province, including places like Upington and Namakwa district. De Lille's roots in the Cape, her coloured identity, and purposeful attempt to market the party toward coloured voters without a political home in the wake of the NP's collapse, were all factors in the mild success the ID enjoyed.

The DP had sought the NP's coloured voters in the Western and Northern Cape through its failed alliance with the party (Van der Westhuizen, 2007:270-279). Without the NP as a partner in the DA, the outcome in the Northern Cape in 2004 of a 6% increase in DA support compared to a 13% increase in DA support in the Western Cape, shows the DP's strategy to have been more successful in the Western Cape.

In the Northern Cape, the DA had succeeded in consolidating white voters under its banner and coloured voters only in isolated incidences, while the ID and ANC had been the greatest beneficiaries of the coloured vote in the 2004 election.

After the elections, newly introduced floor-crossing legislation allowed for NNP members of the provincial legislature to "cross the floor" and become ANC MPL's, thus further entrenching the party's parliamentary majority in the Northern Cape and finally delivering the Western Cape to the ANC (IEC, 2004).

In the 2009 elections, the DA was able to build on its significant support base in the Western Cape to swing NP, ID and, to a lesser extent, coloured ANC voters toward the party. The onset of COPE as an ANC breakaway, also contributed to a further drop in support for the ANC, with the party achieving 9% of the vote. As a result, the Western Cape was again delivered to the opposition, this time in the form of a DA whose nationalist partner had long since dissipated.

In the Northern Cape this was not the case, however. The DA managed to increase its vote by just 1%, giving a total share of 13% of the vote. COPE performed better in this province than in the Western Cape, winning 16% of the vote on the national ballot. The ANC lost 9% of its Northern Cape support base to give it a slightly but significantly reduced majority of 61%. The results of the 2009 election in the Northern Cape will now be considered.

### **3.6.2 The 2009 National Elections in the Northern Cape: COPE's debut**

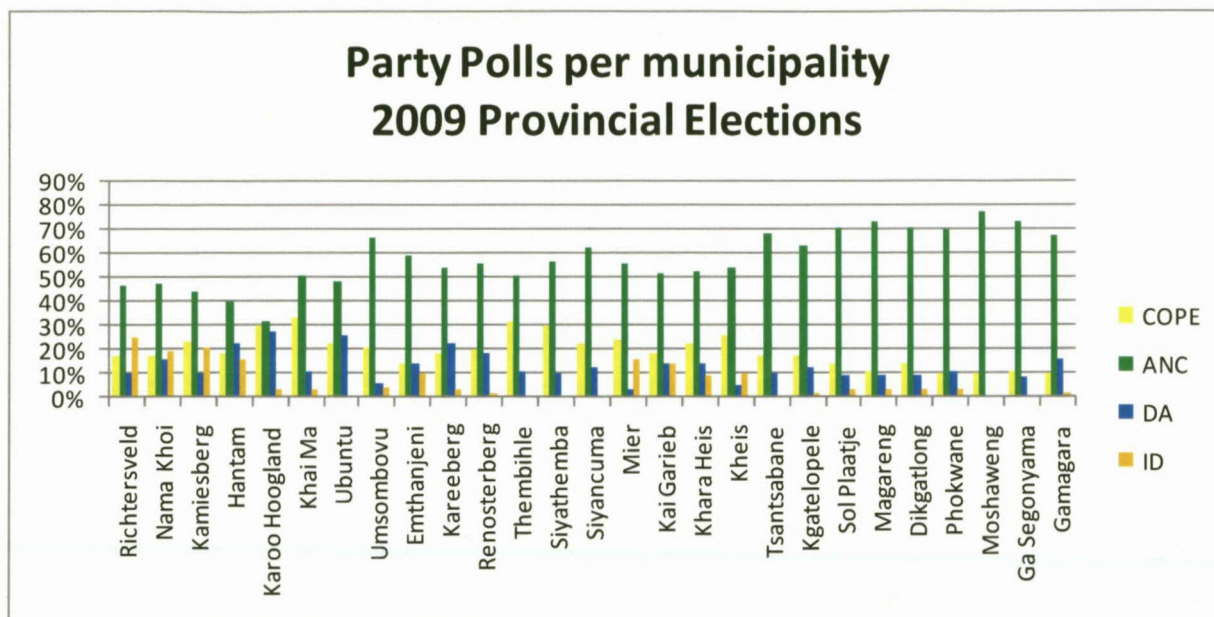


Table 3.6.3 Party polls per municipality – 2009 provincial elections

The outcome of the provincial ballot in the 2009 election in the Northern Cape saw the ANC secure 64%, COPE 17%, and the DA 12% of the vote. Depending on the local council, COPE drew votes from all three of its viable opponents in the 2009 election: the DA, COPE and the ID. Each council is discussed in detail in chapter four (refer to section 4.2) in the context of the establishing the party's objectives in each for the 2011 campaign.

From the above table, it is clear that COPE drew its highest proportions of the vote from councils in the three districts of Namakwa, Pixley ka Seme and Siyanda where coloured voters form the majority of the electorate in almost all cases (see *Richtersveld* to *Tsantsabane* in table 3.6.3). The party also drew smaller but significant proportions of support in councils in the east of the province where black voters form the majority of the electorate.

In 88% of councils, COPE won more support than the DA. In seven councils, ID support was above 10% and can be considered significant to the 2011 poll, given that the party will no longer be represented on the ballot due to its merger with the DA. In 15 councils, ANC support was reduced to 55% or less of the vote.

It appeared that, given the support levels in each municipality for the 2009 election, no opposition party would be able to govern a council outright without the need for a coalition

partner in the 2011 elections. The highest proportion of the vote achieved by any opposition party in a municipality in 2009 was 33%. This occurred in the Khai ma local council and was achieved by COPE. An outright majority requires 51% of the vote, according to the electoral system for local government elections in South Africa (refer to section 3.2.4).

### **3.7 SUMMARY**

The 2011 election was a Municipal election in which party-affiliated and independent candidates competed for seats on local and district councils. For this type of election, a mixed electoral system is used: first-past-the-post for ward candidates as well as Proportional Representation for the allocated of seats to political parties on councils. After the election, elected councillors would have constitutional duties related to overseeing the governance of a municipality.

There are legislated criteria that must be adhered to in order to run as a councillor. Unlike national and provincial elections, voters are required to vote in the voting district where they reside. Voting districts, and the wards they comprise, are delineated through a process called "demarcation", undertaken by the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB) in collaboration with municipalities, the public and the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) every five years, shortly before a municipal election.

There are laws relating to political party funding and campaigning conduct that must be adhered by all parties who contest elections in South Africa. Provincial legislatures oversee the use of state funds provided to political parties and the IEC, criminal and electoral courts regulate and monitor campaign conduct as well punish parties for misconduct.

The Northern Cape is a vast, sparsely populated, arid province with a local government bureaucracy of 27 local councils and 5 district councils. Unemployment on the wide definition is 35.8% (although likely to be far higher) and 52% of households earn their income primarily from social grants. The province has a coloured and white majority (44% and 10% respectively according to BMR projections).

Three main parties were to contest the 2011 elections in the Northern Cape. COPE, formed primarily from a faction that broke away from the ANC in the wake of Jacob Zuma's victory at the ANC elective conference in Polokwane in 2007, would campaign with the national twin slogans of "the time for change is now" and "your partner for real change".

The DA, with a history stemming back to its white liberal roots of the Progressive Federal Party and, later, a failed merger with the New National Party, was already a party of government in the city of Cape Town and Western Cape Province as well as the official opposition in national parliament going into the 2011 election.

An impending merger with the ID, which had significant pockets of support in the Northern Cape, would mean that the DA would attempt to consolidate these voters under its banner in 2011. The party would punt its track record in government with the slogan "we deliver for all".

The ANC was the party of government nationally, provincially in the Northern Cape and in all municipalities in the province. It is also the party of liberation for its role as a mass political vehicle in the struggle against Apartheid. The party would apply its significant resource muscle to attempt to retain all councils in the province in 2011 with the slogan "working together we can build better communities", a continuation of the "partnership with the people"-style message of its 2009 campaign.

The province has a limited range of mass media options that can be used to reach voters with the campaign message. Community media can be found in all districts and is generally reasonably priced for paid media coverage, although earned coverage is limited to a few radio stations and newspapers that actually have a policy of carrying political news.

Commercial print publications are limited to the Western Cape-oriented titles of *Die Son* and *Die Burger* in the west of the province, and the Northern Cape-oriented titles of the DFA *Volksblad* in the east of the province. Various national newspapers that are generally Gauteng-based are circulated in Kimberley. Commercial radio as well as television is monopolized by the various options for Xhosa, seTswana, Afrikaans and English speakers on offer from the public broadcaster, the SABC.

Social media does not yet play a major role in reaching voters in the province due to a lack of internet access and computer literacy, especially among the rural poor. Billboards are available for paid media coverage in the main centres of Kimberley, De Aar and Upington.

The ANC went through a growth period in the Northern Cape between the 1994 and 2004 elections, steadily increasing its support from 51% to 69% as the traditional opposition of the NP continued to disintegrate until it collapsed into the ANC.

This was achieved through a two-pronged strategy of, firstly, co-opting coloured leaders from COSATU and the National Party and, secondly, the delivery of basic services to coloured communities in the NP's former stronghold of the west of the province where they form the majority of the electorate. The party also enjoyed the stable support of a large black electorate, based mainly in the east of the province.

The DA was able to capture significant coloured support in the Western Cape even after the NP left the alliance, a feat that was not achieved in the Northern Cape. While white voters became the base of the DA and black voters the base of the ANC, the coloured electorate by 2009 was divided among all parties, with COPE, the ID and the ANC holding the majority of their support in most cases.

COPE became the official opposition in its debut election, with significant support across all councils. In 15 local councils, ANC support was reduced to 55% or less, with COPE emerging as the strongest opposition party in 12 of these councils. The 2011 election had potential to see these councils being governed by opposition coalitions should the balance of support shift only slightly further toward the opposition.

## CHAPTER 4 – OBJECTIVES AND GOALS FOR THE CAMPAIGN

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a narrative to the objectives calculations (Appendix 1) and the voting district analysis data (Appendix 2). The rationale behind the objectives and vote goals set for each local and district council is discussed.

A key consideration was whether the cost of campaigning in each locality for a minimally-resourced campaign would be relative to the potential for success. COPE's Regional secretaries were also consulted to ensure that objectives would be set relative to the ability of local campaign operations.

### 4.2 OBJECTIVES AND GOALS BY COUNCIL

In the sections to follow, objectives and vote goals are discussed for the five district councils and the local councils that comprise each of them.

These are: Namakwa district (Richtersveld, Nama Khoi, Kamiesberg, Hantam, Karoo Hoogland and Khai man local councils); Pixley ka Seme district (Ubuntu, Umsobomvu, Emthanjeni, Kareeberg, Renosterberg, Thembelihle, Siyathemba and Siyancuma local councils); Siyanda district (Mier, Kai Garieb, Khara Heis, Kheis, Tsantsabane and Kgatelopele local councils); Frances Baard district (Sol Plaatje, Dikgatlong, Magareng and Phokwane local councils); and John Taole district (Ga Segonyana, Gamagara and Moshaweng local councils).

#### 4.2.1 Namakwa district council

Should COPE have reached its municipal vote goals in all six local councils in the Namakwa district, the party would have had an estimated total of 12928 votes. This number of votes would have been enough to win 2 of the 6 PR seats on the district council using the predicted turnout for district (refer to Appendix 1, section 1).

Combined with the district representatives for each of the five municipalities the campaign aimed to win, COPE would have gained 7 seats of the 15 available on the council. The DA would then have had to provide a minimum of 1 seat to the opposition's total to achieve the majority of 8 seats required to govern the district.

*Table 4.1.1 – Objectives and municipal vote goals for Namakwa district council*

Council	Total council seats	2009 Hypothetical council seats	2011 Objective (council seats)	Ward seats objective	Predicted turnout	COPE Base vote	Swing vote	Municipal Vote goal	Proportion of the vote required
Richtersveld	8	1	2	0	4147	662	1217	889	21
Nama Khoi	17	3	5	3	17094	2742	4704	4740	28
Kamiesberg	7	2	3	2	4306	959	1222	1661	39
Hantam	9	2	3	2	7823	1380	1627	2289	29
Karoo Hoogland	7	2	3	2	4148	1148	752	1635	39
Khai ma	7	2	3	2	4204	1366	386	1714	41

#### 4.2.1.1 Richtersveld local council

An objective of two PR seats was set for the Richtersveld – an increase of one seat on what COPE's 2009 performance of 17% would have earned the party (refer to Appendix 1, section 1.1).

This was less ambitious than other local councils in the district because the party had active branches in only three out of the four wards prior to the election. Two of these branches were located in Port Nolloth and the other in Sanddrift, meaning the party could only have expected to run an effective campaign in these two centres (Van Wyk, 2010).

Given the lack of grassroots structures in this local council, the campaign would have best been served by focusing the bulk of its resources in other priority councils to achieve the objective of governing the district.

The ANC achieved 46% of the vote in the Richtersveld in the 2009 elections. Hypothetical seat calculations based on 2009 proportions of the vote for each party showed that the ANC would have won four seats, with the opposition taking the other four seats. This would have resulted in a "hung council", an outcome that yields no outright governing majority for any party.

A repeat of this result in 2011 would have seen COPE occupy half of the opposition's seats, giving the party strong leverage in negotiations after the election on what the governance arrangement of the council will be. If negotiations fail to yield a governing coalition then a coin is tossed to determine who will govern the council (South Africa, 2000a).

A 50% chance, at least, of having a stake in the governance of the council was not seen as a bad outcome in setting the objective for the Richtersveld, given the state of the campaign organization in this locality at the time.

The campaign was required to focus primarily on the VD's comprising Port Nolloth and Sanddrift, as centres where the party had active presence. To succeed the party would need to retain its base vote in the centres of Kuboes and Alexander Bay and win significant portions of the swing vote in centres where its structures were active (refer to Appendix 2, section 1).

This would effectively have negated the need to expend too much of the campaign's scarce resources in the surrounding farms and, especially, the other major centre besides Port Nolloth - the ANC stronghold of Alexander Bay.

#### 4.2.1.2 *Nama Khoi local council*

COPE would have won three seats in Nama Khoi based on its 2009 performance of 17%. An ambitious objective of five seats was set for this council, which governs Springbok and surrounding towns.

This is the largest local council in the district in terms of the registered voter population. The voting district analysis also showed a high proportion of swing votes due to the strength of the ID in past elections.

The ANC won 47% of the vote in 2009, meaning the council could, in all probability, be won by an opposition coalition in the 2011 elections. An objective of five seats would have ensured that COPE led that coalition, with the DA coming in as a junior partner (refer to Appendix 1, section 1.2).

The five-seat objective was therefore as much an acknowledgement of the opposition's prospects in the council as it was of the threat of being overtaken by the DA should that party have succeeded in consolidating the swing vote.

To achieve the objective, the campaign was required to focus on 11 out of the 24 VD's, where 97% of its municipal vote goal is located due to large base votes and high swing potential. These VD's comprise the centres of Bergsig, Okiep and the outlying villages of Kommagas, Matjieskloof, Concordia and Steinkopf. Ward seat objectives were also set for wards comprising Matjieskloof, Okiep and Kommagas due to COPE being in striking distance of winning (refer to Appendix 2, section 2).

#### 4.2.1.3 *Kamiesberg local council*

The objective for Kamiesberg was set at three seats. This would have been sufficient to lead a governing coalition, with the DA providing the extra seat needed to achieve a council majority of four seats. The ANC managed 44% of the vote in 2009, which falls short of a governing majority (refer to Appendix 1, section 1.3).

Like other councils in the district, significant past support for the ID resulted in high swing potential for the 2011 election. To achieve its objective, the campaign was required to maintain its base vote and win over 57% of the swing vote.

This was conceivable due to the party's support levels in communities, where the bulk of the former ID vote lives, being stronger than that of the DA's. The campaign was required to focus specifically on five of the 11 VD's with the highest registered populations, swing potential and COPE base votes.

These VD's comprised 61% of the vote goal and included the larger centres of Garies, Kamieskroon and Karkams, as well as Kheis and Leliesfontein - two of the slightly smaller villages. All VD's were considered important for contributing to the municipal vote goal, however, as voters are dispersed in small pockets within this rural council (refer to Appendix 2, section 3).

#### *4.2.1.4 Hantam local council*

The Hantam local council, which governs Calvinia and surrounding areas, was likely to be one of the most heavily contested councils in the province, with all three viable parties showing prospects for governing the council in 2011 based on 2009 results. An objective of 3 seats was set. Achieving this would have allowed COPE to lead a governing coalition for which the DA would provide the extra two seats required (refer to Appendix 1, section 1.4).

Calvinia, the largest town in the municipality, is the second largest centre in Namakwa and is strategically important for future elections and control of the district. The ID enjoyed significant support in this council, which led to large numbers of swing voters for the 2011 election. There were prospects for COPE to win three of the five wards were the party to succeed in maintaining its base vote and winning over swing voters in significant numbers.

Vote goals for each of these wards were set accordingly and, as a result, the campaign was required to focus primarily on three of the 22 VD's where 81% of its municipal vote goal is located. These VD's comprise the centres of Calvinia and Loeriesfontein. Other centres such as Niewoudtville and Brandvlei were not prioritized due to the high number of ANC base votes in these places (refer to Appendix 2, section 4).

#### 4.2.1.5 *Karoo Hoogland local council*

COPE and the DA would have won two seats in the Karoo Hoogland council - which governs Williston, Sutherland, Fraserburg and surrounding areas - based on the parties' 2009 performance.

The ANC recorded its worst performance out of all councils in the province in 2009, winning just 31% of the vote. Unlike other councils in the district, the ID had little past support while the ACDP maintained a small but significant presence in this council – enough to win one seat based on its 2009 performance.

Local leaders claim that most ACDP leaders have defected to COPE, however (Julies 2010). In 2009 COPE recorded one of its highest polls relative to other localities in the province – 30% in the Karoo Hoogland municipality.

The local campaign organization is active and politicians were popular in their communities (Van Wyk, 2010). Objectives were set accordingly – two ward seats and one PR seat on the local council (refer to Appendix 1, section 1.5).

To achieve this, the campaign was required to focus primarily on three VD's comprising the main municipal centres of Fraserburg, Williston and Sutherland. Of the 18 VD's, 74% of the municipal vote goal was located in these three (refer to Appendix 2, section 5).

#### 4.2.1.6 *Khai ma local council*

The objective for Khai Ma was set at three seats. Achieving this would have enabled COPE to lead a coalition, with the DA providing the additional seat required to establish a governing coalition.

The ANC won 50% of the support in this council in 2009, which put the party in a position to lose its majority should support decline any further in 2011. In 2009, COPE achieved one of its highest proportions of the vote for any locality in the province in Khai ma (33% of the vote in the 2009 elections), worth two seats on the council (refer to Appendix 1, section 1.6).

The campaign in Khai Ma was required to focus primarily on Blyvooruitsig, a coloured-dominated residential area in Pofadder. In this area alone the VD vote goals totalled 700 votes, or 41% of the municipal vote goal. There were a further four VD's on which the campaign needed to focus to achieve its municipal vote goal. These VD's comprised the rural villages of Aggeneys, Pella and Onseepkans.

Unlike other councils in Namakwa, Khai Ma showed very little swing voters and no significant past support in recent elections for any parties besides the ANC and the DA. Since DA support was confined to one VD comprising the white-dominated residential area in Pofadder, the campaign was required to go after ANC base voters in the aforementioned VD's in an attempt to persuade them to vote COPE (refer to Appendix 2, section 6).

#### 4.2.2 **Pixley ka Seme district council**

Should COPE have succeeded in achieving its vote goals in all councils, it would have gained five district representative seats for the councils of Emthanjeni, Renosterberg, Thembelihle,

Siyathemba and Siyancuma. The party would also have won two of the PR seats on the district council, giving COPE a total of 7 out of the 18 seats available on the district council (refer to Appendix 1, section 2).

The DA would have needed to add a minimum of two seats to the opposition's total to enforce a hung council of nine seats for the ANC and nine for the opposition. There was some chance, therefore, of an opposition coalition, led by COPE, governing the district after the 2011 elections, albeit less promising than the prospects for governing the Namakwa district council.

*Table 4.2.2 Objectives and municipal vote goals for Pixley ka Seme district council*

Council	Total council seats	2009 Hypothetical council seats	2011 Objective (council seats)	Ward seats objective	Predicted turnout	Base vote	Swing vote	Vote goal	Proportion of the vote required
Ubuntu	8	2	2	1	6025	1292	336	1284	21
Umsobomvu	10	2	3	2	9258	1830	855	2564	27
Emthanjeni	14	3	3	0	14188	1762	2847	2718	19
Kareeberg	7	1	2	0	4550	762	845	1104	24
Renosterberg	7	2	3	2	4135	811	482	1874	45
Thembelihle	7	2	3	3	5530	1621	559	2094	39
Siyathemba	8	2	4	2	6842	1892	423	3097	45
Siyancuma	11	3	4	1	11404	2332	906	3587	31

#### *4.2.2.1 Ubuntu local council*

COPE was within striking distance prior to the 2011 election of winning the ward comprising Richmond based on the VD analysis. The ward was therefore the ward was allocated the largest share of the municipal vote goal - 780 between its two VD's or 59% of the municipal vote goal (refer to Appendix 2, section 7).

An objective of two seats was set for Ubuntu, one of these being the ward seat comprising the town of Richmond. The ANC was under threat of losing this council in the 2011 election given the 48% proportion of the vote it won in the area in 2009 – short of a majority. Should these support levels have remained static in 2011, the ANC would have won 4 seats and the opposition four – two each for COPE and the DA (refer to Appendix 1, section 2.1).

In the run up to the 2011 election, COPE did not have active branches in all wards (Saayman, 2010a). The objective was therefore set to maintain a stake in governance arrangements after the election by holding half of the opposition's seats in a hung council (no majority for any party).

The municipal vote goal to support the objective was set more ambitiously for the Richmond ward where COPE's local structures are capable of winning support. Large swathes of farms with minimal registered voters that comprise a significant number of VD's in the council, where not set ambitious vote goals to avoid the high campaigning cost for these vast areas.

#### 4.2.2.2 *Umsobomvu local council*

Based on the VD analysis prior to the 2011 election, there was potential for COPE to win two wards in this council: one comprising part of the town of Noupoort and the other comprising the coloured-dominated suburb of Lowreyville in Colesberg.

Of the municipal vote goal, 850 or 37% was located in the 10 VD's that make up these two wards, out of a total of 24 VD's (refer to Appendix 2, section 8).

An objective of three seats in total was set for Umsobomvu. Should the party have succeeded in winning the two wards in which it was in striking distance of doing so, then merely maintaining its base vote in the remaining wards would have enabled the party to win an additional PR seat.

There was no potential to govern the council given the ANC's dominance in many VD's with high numbers of registered voters, evident in the party's 2009 election poll of 66% (refer to Appendix 1, section 2.2).

#### 4.2.2.3 *Emthanjeni local council*

An objective of three seats was set for the Emthanjeni council which governs De Aar and is the largest in the Pixley ka Seme district in terms of the registered voting population. Based on its 2009 performance COPE would have won three seats and the objective seeks to maintain this level of support (refer to Appendix 1, section 2.3).

Objectives were not set ambitiously in this council due to its size and the subsequent cost of making enough of an impact to significantly improve COPE's support, given the modest campaign budget and better prospects in other councils.

A significant drop in support was also evident between the party's 2009 election poll and an August 2010 by-election in this municipality (IEC). How active and organized the party's structures are was also questionable according to the regional secretary (Saayman, 2010b).

Nevertheless, Emthanjeni is a large council and maintaining a presence there was considered important for COPE's future election prospects. To achieve the objective, the campaign was generally required to maintaining the party's base vote in each VD, with no significant concentration of the municipal vote goal prevalent in any cluster of VD's (refer to Appendix 2, section 9).

#### 4.2.2.4 *Kareeberg local council*

In 2009, the ANC won 54% of the vote in Kareeberg, the council governing the central Karoo town of Carnarvon, as well as the villages of Van Wyks Vlei and Vosburg. This suggested that there was some potential for the opposition to govern in coalition should this proportion be reduced to under 50% in the 2011 election.

COPE required only a marginal increase on its 2009 performance to reach the objective of two seats set for the council (refer to Appendix 1, section 2.4).

Since the 2009 election, influential local politicians, including the former mayor and a former MP for the ANC have joined the leadership of COPE's local structures (Sinclair 2011).

Should the objective have been reached, the possibility existed to form a coalition government with the DA, with both parties having two seats each. Based on the VD analysis, COPE was also within striking distance of winning one ward, comprising the village of Van Wyks vlei. Of the municipal vote goal, 44% was concentrated in the Van Wyks Vlei ward (refer to Appendix 2, section 10).

#### 4.2.2.5 *Renosterberg local council*

An objective of three seats was set for Renosterberg, which governs Petrusville, Vanderkloof, Phillipstown and surrounding areas. This required an ambitious increase in the party's proportion of the vote from 20% in the 2009 election to 45% in 2011 (refer to Appendix 1, section 2.5).

There was a possibility that this was achievable due to two factors. First, a by-election in August 2010 saw the party significantly increase its support in one ward (IEC). Another ward was also won by COPE in December 2009, one of three the party has managed to win in the province (IEC).

Also, the local branches were, at the time, reportedly hard-working and well-coordinated by a hands-on sub-regional leadership (Saayman, 2010b). Local structures had formed relationships with the farming community and business owners in Vanderkloof who were also able to provide resources for the campaign (Havenga, 2010).

Renosterberg is the smallest council in the province in terms of registered population. The campaign was required to show an increase in support for COPE in every VD as a contribution to the municipal vote goal, compelling the campaign to focus on the council as a whole to achieve the objective (refer to Appendix 2, section 11).

#### 4.2.2.6 *Thembilihle local council*

Thembilihle is the council in the Pixley ka Seme district in which COPE, based on the VD analysis at the time, required the smallest increase in its support from the 2009 election in order to lead a governing coalition.

The party's 2009 proportion of the vote in this municipality was the highest of all in the province at 31%. The ANC was also sitting tenuously at 50% in terms of its support won in the same election. An objective of three seats was set for the council, which would have enabled COPE to lead a governing coalition after the 2011 election (refer to Appendix 1, section 2.6).

COPE was also within a maximum of 150 votes of winning three of the four wards and the vote goals were set accordingly in these places. Two of the wards were in Hopetown and the third was in Strydenburg, a neighbouring town that makes up the council's jurisdiction along with the surrounding farms (refer to Appendix 2, section 12).

The campaign must focus on maximizing its vote in all wards. There were low numbers of swing voters evident in the council, meaning the campaign would need to persuade the

ANC's base vote primarily, but also the DA's base to a lesser extent, to vote for COPE in the 2011 election.

#### 4.2.2.7 *Siyathemba local council*

COPE won a significant share of the vote in the 2009 elections in Siyathemba (30%), making this council one of its most successful in terms of past performance. An objective of four seats was set, which was ambitious given that the party would have achieved two hypothetical seats based on the 2009 result (refer to Appendix 1, section 2.7).

Four seats would have enabled the party to govern in coalition, with the DA providing the additional seat required to attain a majority. Branches were active prior to the 2011 elections and had excellent public speakers, it was reported. There was also a lot of reported agency on the ground, examples of this being a locally sustained office premises, painted walls and self-bought T-shirts (Saayman, 2010b).

The municipal vote goal was calculated significantly higher than the party's base vote, meaning that all VD's required the focus of the campaign. Two VD's in particular, though, Omega (a residential area in Prieska) and Marydale (a neighbouring village), were priorities given the high numbers of votes the party needed in these VD's to achieve the municipal vote goal. Together these VD's comprised 46% of the municipal vote goal (refer to Appendix 2, section 13).

#### 4.2.2.8 *Siyancuma local council*

Based on the VD analysis, there were prospects for winning wards in Siyancuma but the council was out of reach in terms of an overall win in this election due to low swing

potential and ANC support of 62% in the 2009 election. COPE would have achieved three hypothetical seats based on its performance of 22% in 2009 (refer to Appendix 1, section 2.8).

An objective of four seats was set, with two being ward seats comprising the town's coloured-dominated township of Breipaal; parts of the white-dominated residential area in Douglas; and the outlying area of Vaallus and Douglas Holiday Resort.

In the five VD's that make up these two wards, vote goals required 1850 votes to win, or 52% of the municipal vote goal. Targeting Breipaal specifically was important for keeping the DA from gaining back the coloured support it lost to COPE in the 2009 election. The DA's proportion of the vote declined from 31% in 2006 to 12% in 2009 mainly due to its loss of support in Breipaal to COPE (refer to Appendix 2, section 14).

The white-dominated residential area in Douglas was also required to yield over 100 votes for COPE if ward 5 was to be won. This was to be the task of COPE's provincial Treasurer, Lemfvia van Niekerk, a former NP leader, who resided there and was active in this VD at the time of study.

#### **4.2.3 Siyanda district council**

Should COPE have succeeded in achieving its vote goals in all councils, it would have gained five district council representative seats for the local councils of Mier, Kai Garieb, Khara Heis, Kheis and Tsantsabane. It would also have won two of the PR seats on the district council, giving the party a total of 7 out of the 21 seats available on the district council (refer to Appendix 1, section 3).

The DA would need to add a minimum of four seats to the opposition's total to enable COPE to lead a governing coalition of 11 seats to the ANC's 10. As was the case in the Pixley ka Seme district council, there was an outside chance for COPE to govern the district after the

2011 elections, albeit less promising than the prospects for governing the Namakwa district council.

Council	Total council seats	2009 Hypothetical council seats	2011 Objective (council seats)	Ward seats objective	Predicted turnout	COPE Base vote	Swing vote	Municipal vote goal	Proportion of the vote required
Mier	7	2	3	1	3599	858	674	1366	38
Kai Garieb	17	3	5	1	16542	2830	3588	4548	27
Khara Heis	27	6	8	2	28122	6146	4634	8004	28
Kheis	7	2	3	2	5191	1306	1111	2013	39
Tsantsabane	11	2	2	1	9065	1475	1407	1409	16
Kgatelopele	7	2	2	0	5588	870	610	1186	21

#### 4.2.3.1 *Mier local council*

An objective of three seats was set for Mier, a former District Management Area (DMA) that was to be contested as a fully-fledged local council for the first time in 2011. The council is a rural, sparsely populated expanse situated in the northernmost tip of South Africa bordering Namibia and Botswana (refer to Appendix 1, section 3.1).

As a result, this is an expensive council in terms of the petrol and transport money that would be needed to reach its outlying areas where small but significant portions of registered voters reside. Vote goals were set lower for VD's comprising large expansive rural areas with minimal numbers of voters to avoid the campaigning cost.

The VD analysis showed high swing potential due to significant ID support in the past. Either the DA or COPE would have needed to capitalize on this swing vote if the opposition was to win the council. The objective was set with the intention of COPE leading a governing coalition with three seats by capturing the ID vote in sufficient numbers.

Significant numbers of the ANC's base vote also needed to be converted due to the party's 55% showing in the 2009 election. The DA needed to provide the additional seat required to govern by successfully winning over a reasonable portion of the ID vote. To achieve its

municipal vote goal of 1366, COPE was required to focus on four VD's comprising the centres of Loubous (located in a seemingly winnable ward for which a ward seat objective was set), Rietfontein, Philandersbron and Askam, the vote goals of which add up to 1050 – 77% of the municipal vote goal (refer to Appendix 2, section 15).

#### 4.2.3.2 *Kai Garieb local council*

An objective of five seats was set for the Kai Garieb local council. This required COPE to reach a municipal vote goal of 4548 by attracting high numbers of swing voters to add to the party's base vote of 2830.

This was an ambitious objective given that COPE's 2009 performance of 18% would have won the party three seats. The ANC managed a tenuous 51% of the vote in the 2009 election, meaning the council could potentially be won by an opposition coalition in the 2011 elections.

The opposition party able to capitalize on the significant support for the ID in past elections (14% in 2009) would determine who leads a coalition government should the ANC have failed to reach a majority proportion of the vote. The objective was therefore set with the need to consolidate former ID voters under COPE's banner in mind (refer to Appendix 1, section 3.1).

The Kai Garieb council governs three main towns: Kakamas, Kenhardt and Keimoes. There are also a number of small villages that make up this vast municipality on the banks of the Orange River. Small pockets of voters are found in what the locals call *eilande* (islands), a term used to describe small communities of farm workers who are employed seasonally to work in the vineyards that line the banks of the river.

Of the vote goal, 3000 votes or 66% was set in just six of the 32 VD's that make up this council, due to the numbers of registered voters, wing voters and COPE base votes in these

areas. The campaign was required to target these areas which include the three main towns and the village of Augrabies.

The ward comprising Kenhardt and surrounding farms was allocated a ward seat objective due to it being the location of the highest base vote in a single VD in the council – 950 (refer to Appendix 2, section 16).

#### 4.2.3.3 *Khara Heis local council*

The Khara Heis local council governs the city of Uppington, the second largest urban centre in the province, and has the second highest number of registered voters of all local councils. The ANC managed 52% of the vote in the 2009 elections, meaning this city had the potential to be governed by an opposition coalition after the 2011 elections should ANC support decline to under 50%.

Based on COPE's 2009 performance of 22%, the party would have won 6 seats on this 27 seat council. An objective of eight seats was set for the 2011 elections (refer to Appendix 1, section 3.3).

The VD analysis showed the DA's base vote to be enough to deliver the party six seats, enabling COPE to lead a governing coalition with a majority of 14 seats. There were high numbers of swing voters (4634) evident as well due to significant past support for the ID (9% in 2009). The campaign was required to capitalize on these votes at the expense of the DA, in particular, if it was to prevent the council being led by other opposition.

COPE's future prospects for leading a governing coalition in the province after the 2014 elections would have been under threat if the DA were to lead a governing coalition the second largest council in the province, it was reasoned prior to the elections. A win of this nature for any opposition could be used as a springboard toward gaining momentum to take the province at a later stage.

A vote goal of 8004 was set for COPE to achieve its objective. In just nine of the 32 VD's that make up this council, 77% of the vote goal was concentrated. These VD's comprise the coloured townships of Rosedale, Progress, Louisvale road and Morning glory. The VD analysis showed a high base vote for COPE in all these VD's and high numbers of swing voters, making it possible for the party to win two of the wards comprising these areas as well, for which ward seats objectives were set (refer to Appendix 2, section 17).

#### 4.2.3.4 *Kheis local council*

An objective of three seats was set for Kheis municipality which governs Groblershoop and surrounding villages near Upington. Based on the party's 2009 performance of 26%, COPE would have won two seats on this seven seat council. The ANC delivered 54% of the vote which puts the opposition in striking distance of governing the council in coalition (refer to Appendix 1, section 3.4).

COPE would have required the DA to provide the additional seat to form a governing coalition of four seats. A vote goal of 2013 was set for COPE, which is 707 votes more than the party's base vote according to the VD analysis.

The bulk of the vote goal (1730 or 76%) was set in four target VD's comprising the villages of Grootdrink and Topline, and the coloured-dominated residential area of Sternham in Groblershoop. The village of Wegdraai showed high numbers of ANC base voters and was not set ambitious targets (refer to Appendix 2, section 18).

The Sternham VD also formed part of ward 3 which COPE was within striking distance of winning according to the VD analysis. A ward seat objective was accordingly set.

#### 4.2.3.5 *Tsantsabane local council*

An objective of two seats was set for COPE in the Tsantsabane local council, which governs the mining town of Postmasburg and surrounding areas. The demographics of this council differ from the more western portion of the Siyanda district due to proximity to the North West province. A larger seTswana-speaking population, a traditional constituency of the ANC, is in higher proportion in this council.

As a result, ANC support was higher here than elsewhere in the district – 68% based on its 2009 performance. COPE's support in the same election would have won the party two hypothetical seats, the same as the objective set (refer to Appendix 1, section 3.5).

A vote goal of 1409 was set which required the party to maintain its approximate base vote and replicate its 2009 performance. The coloured-dominated township of Postdene, comprising a winnable ward in the council according to the VD analysis, was prioritised when setting VD vote goals for the campaign. In the two VD's making up this township, COPE's highest base vote in the council was evident as well as the bulk of the council's swing voters.

Of the vote goal, 75% was concentrated in these two VD's and the remaining 25% in the other 22 VD's comprising the council. This would also ensure that campaign resources could be concentrated in a smaller area rather than everywhere in an unwinnable council for the 2011 election (refer to Appendix 2, section 19).

#### 4.2.3.6 *Kgatelopele local council*

Like Tsantsabane, the VD analysis showed a high number of ANC base voters in Kgatelopele in proportion, likely due to a larger black proportion of the population relative to other municipalities. The township of Thlakalotlou, for example, was an ANC stronghold that had consistently yielded voting outcomes of almost 100% in favour of the party.

COPE's 2009 performance would have earned the party two seats on this eight seat council. An objective of maintaining two seats was set since this would require the party only to maintain its base vote in a council that showed no prospect for winning (refer to Appendix 1, section 3.6).

The municipal vote goal was spread fairly evenly among the seven VD's in this small council due to COPE having a small but significant base in each, with no VD particularly dominant in terms of the party's base vote concentration in comparison with others (refer to Appendix 2, section 20).

#### **4.2.4 Frances Baard district council**

Should COPE successfully have reached its vote goal in Sol plaatje, the only council that was recommended for the party to contest in this district, a total of three seats on this 27 seat district council would have been gained. Two of these seats would have come from district representatives for the Sol Plaatje councils.

The remaining seats would have been allocated on a PR basis were the party to reach the 19% proportion of the vote required to achieve the objective for the Sol Plaatje council. Not contesting the other three councils in the district would have, in all probability, made little difference to the party's representation on the district council given the low levels of base voters and prospects for growth in support.

There was little scope for the opposition to reach a governing majority of 14 seats in this district due to high numbers of ANC base voters in each council. As will be outlined sections 4.2.4.1 – 4.2.4.4, it was reasoned that campaign resources would be better spent in the largest centre of Kimberley for this district, as opposed to spreading the campaign too thin in the surrounding towns and villages of the countryside.

Council	Total council seats	2009 Hypothetical council seats	2011 Objective (council seats)	Ward seats objective	Predicted turnout	COPE Base vote	Swing vote	Vote goal	Proportion of the vote required
Sol Plaatje	62	9	12	1	74722	11138	5581	13999	19
Dikgatlong	13	2	0	0	13795	1906	1811	N/A	N/A
Magareng	9	1	0	0	7476	781	750	N/A	N/A
Phokwane	18	2	0	0	17935	1161	2169	N/A	N/A

#### 4.2.4.1 *Sol Plaatje local council*

An objective of 12 seats was set for the Sol Plaatje local council, which governs Kimberley and has the largest registered population of all municipalities in the province. Based on its 2009 performance of 15%, COPE would have won nine seats on this 62 seat council.

The DA would have won 10 seats based on its proportion of the vote in the same election. The objective was set with the aim of ensuring that COPE becomes the official opposition in the council (refer to Appendix 1, section 4.1).

The VD analysis showed that the ANC to have good levels of support across all VD's, with the exception of the white-dominated suburbs that provide the bulk of the DA's base vote. The ANC's dominance at the polls was especially due to its solid base voters in Galeshewe, the black-dominated township in Kimberley.

A municipal vote goal of 13 999 was needed for the campaign to reach its objectives in Sol Plaatje. Of the 72 VD's that comprise this council, one third of the vote goal was concentrated in eight VD's that cover the coloured-dominated townships of Colville, Roodepan, Greenpoint, Homevale and Floors.

These townships showed significant numbers of base voters for COPE relative to other areas in the city. There are also more swing voters in these areas relative to others which the campaign could potentially have won over.

A further 17 VD's were allocated another third of the municipal vote goal. The remaining 47 VD's contain the last third of the municipal vote goal, spread in fairly even numbers across them (refer to Appendix 2, section 21).

The highest concentration of the municipal vote goal for a single ward was set for ward 22, which comprises Greenpoint and part of the neighbouring middle-class suburb of Monument Heights. A ward seat objective was set given the strength of COPE's local leadership and the size of its base vote in relation to the ANC.

The seat is currently occupied by Jahn Pietersen who is one of the few independent councillors in the country to have taken on the ANC and won based on his local popularity. He joined COPE before the 2009 election and delivered the party a base vote that is within striking distance of the ANC's. He currently occupies the post of COPE's Frances Baard Regional Chairperson (Kies, 2010b).

#### 4.2.4.2 *Dikgatlong local council*

An objective was not set for the 13-seat Dikgatlong local council, which governs the towns of Barkley West and Delportshoop and Windsorton. Based on its 2009 performance, COPE would have won two hypothetical seats on the council with the 14% of the vote it garnered. The ANC won a dominant 70% of the vote in this council for the same election - enough for a significant majority of nine seats (refer to Appendix 1, section 4.2).

The VD analysis suggested little reward for COPE in contesting the Dikgatlong council in the 2011 election, especially given the minimal campaign resources and the need to concentrate the campaign in areas where wins could be generated.

Low numbers of COPE base voters and swing voters, as well as a vast municipal area that would be costly to contest, were the key considerations in not setting an objective for Dikgatlong (refer to Appendix 2, section 22).

Given the ANC's dominance in the Frances Baard district as a whole relative to COPE's weakness, maintaining fair levels of support in this district could be done by directing resources centrally to Kimberley instead of squandering them in the surrounding towns and villages.

#### 4.2.4.3 *Magareng local council*

COPE managed 11% of the votes in the Magareng council in the 2009 elections - enough for one seat on this nine-seat council. The ANC won a resounding 73% of the vote in Magareng in the 2009 elections, enough for seven seats - almost a clean-sweep given that the DA was also able to manage just one hypothetical seat for their 9% 2009 result (refer to Appendix 1, section 4.3).

This is one of the party's least favourable results of all councils in the province, yielding also one of the lowest showings for COPE in numbers of votes: 912. COPE's base vote was even less impressive, the VD analysis showed – 781 votes out of a predicted turnout of 7476 (refer to Appendix 2, section 23).

It was concluded based on a lack of prospects evident in the VD analysis, that campaign resources would in all probability be better spent in other councils with better prospects. As a result no objective was set for the Magareng council, which governs the rural town of Warrenton and surrounding farms.

#### 4.2.4.4 *Phokwane local council*

The eighteen-seat Phokwane council governs the towns of Hartswater, Jankempstorp, Pampierstad and surrounding farms. The council borders the North West province and has

high numbers of ANC base voters due to the dominance of the party's traditional black, seTswana-speaking constituency within its borders.

COPE recorded just 10% of the vote in Phokwane, its lowest proportion in any council in the 2009 elections. The ANC would have won 12 hypothetical seats in the same election, enough for a two-thirds council majority (refer to Appendix 1, section 4.4).

The VD analysis showed low numbers of COPE base voters (1661 out of a predicted turnout of 17935). There was little evidence of prospects for any tangible gains for COPE in return for its campaign resources due to strong ANC support and low numbers of swing voters (refer to Appendix 2, section 24). An objective was therefore not set for the council due to the need to concentrate campaign resources elsewhere.

#### **4.2.5 John Taole Gaetsewe district council**

The John Taole Gaetsewe district has the smallest population of all districts, just 4.5% of the total provincial population (refer to Chapter 2, section 3.3.2). COPE also recorded its worst performances of the 2009 election in the three local councils that make up this rural district – the highest proportion of the vote being 11%, polled in Ga Segonyana.

In setting the objectives, it was reasoned that the apparent prospects of winning local and district councils elsewhere in the province, evident in the VD analysis, as well as minimal campaign resources, did not warrant campaigning in this district.

Reaching campaign objectives in the west of the province where the majority of swing voters were residing would have enabled COPE to consolidate support there in order to take on more difficult districts in a provincial election, it was reasoned. The reasoning behind not setting objectives is discussed for each local council in the sections to follow.

Council	Total council seats	2009 Hypothetical council seats	2011 Objective (council seats)	Ward seats objective	Predicted turnout	COPE Base vote	Swing vote	Vote goal	Proportion of the vote required
Ga Segonyana	25	3	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gamagara	10	1	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Moshaweng	29	N/A	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

#### 4.2.5.1 *Ga Segonyana local council*

The Ga Segonyana council has a total of 25 seats and governs the town of Kuruman and surrounding rural areas. Kuruman is the largest centre in the district. COPE would have won two seats on the council, hypothetically, with its 2009 performance 11% of the vote.

The ANC is dominant, achieving one of its strongest showings in a local council by winning 73% of the vote in the 2009 elections, worth 18 hypothetical seats (refer to Appendix 1, section 5.1).

A unique feature of this council, is the small pockets of support for the United Christian Democratic Party (UCDP) in selected wards, prevalent in just one other council in the province. The UCDP is the party of former Bophutatswana homeland leader Lucas Mangope. It draws its support almost exclusively from areas previously under the jurisdiction of the former Apartheid homeland.

Despite this slight swing potential, the council is too vast with little chance of generating wins or making an impact on a stretched budget, at least for the 2011 election, due to the lack of a concentration of COPE support in any ward. No objectives were set Ga Segonyana as a result.

#### 4.2.5.2 *Gamagara local council*

The nine-seat Gamagara council governs the mining towns of Kathu, Dingleton, Deben and Olifantshoek as well as surrounding rural areas. Like Phokwane, COPE achieved its lowest proportion of the vote in any council: 10%. By contrast the ANC managed 67% of the vote in Gamagara in 2009, which would have given the party seven of the nine available seats, hypothetically (refer to Appendix 1, section 5.2).

There are few swing voters and a dispersed COPE base vote with no significant pockets of support that could result in ward seat wins (refer to Appendix 2, section 26). Contesting the entire council in the hopes of winning just one PR seat did not appear to be a sensible option given the limited campaign budget.

Since the 2009 election, the COPE had battled to maintain active branch structures in this municipality (Mabilu, 2011). Given the party's minimal prospects for gains and the need to focus campaign resources elsewhere, no objectives were set here for the 2011 election.

#### 4.2.5.3 *Moshaweng local council*

The Moshaweng local council on the North West province border governs the rural town of Mothibistad and surrounding villages and farm land. Due to the changes to the council's boundaries during the incorporation of parts of this area from the North West province into the Northern Cape, and the subsequent demarcation process, it is not possible to get comparative data for the 2006 and 2009 elections

This data is required for the sample needed to perform a VD analysis. As a result, no analysis could be done for this local council. Results from the 2009 election, however, show the ANC to have recorded its highest proportion of the vote for any local council in the province – 77%. This would have been enough to give the party an overwhelming majority on the 29 seat local council. COPE managed just 10% of the vote in this council in 2009 (IEC, 2009).

Like Ga Segonyana, the council is too vast with low levels of support for COPE. The cost of contesting here relative to the minimal prospects for gaining ground, it was reasoned, did not justify the setting of objectives for Moshaweng.

#### **4.3 SUMMARY**

The Namakwa District showed the best prospects for COPE to lead governing coalitions, not only in a number of local councils, but also in the district council, according to the VD analysis. High levels of COPE base voters as well swing voters, primarily due to significant past ID support in the area, were prevalent in especially the Nama Khoi, Kamiesberg and Hantam local councils.

Objectives and goals for these councils were set to enable COPE to lead governing coalitions by building on its base vote as well consolidating significant portions of the swing vote. In the Khai ma and Karoo Hoogland local councils, high numbers of COPE base voters and potential to lead governing coalitions were evident, albeit with a relatively insignificant number of swing voters.

Objectives and goals were set accordingly for these two councils, with COPE needing to win over ANC base voters to enable it to lead governing coalitions after the 2011 elections. Due to the limited ability of the local campaign organization and lower COPE base vote proportion relative the rest of the district, objectives were set less ambitiously for the Richtersveld, albeit with the contribution in mind that the council would need to make toward COPE leading a governing coalition in the district council.

Prior to the 2011 elections, the Pixley ka Seme District was characterized by high numbers of COPE base voters in the eastern portion, comprising the councils of Renosterberg, Thembelihle and Siyathemba, as well as low numbers of swing voters in much of the district. The VD analysis showed prospects for COPE to lead a governing coalition in the three aforementioned councils after the 2011 elections.

Objectives and goals were set accordingly in these three councils with objectives in other councils being set with a view to increasing COPE's proportion of the vote in each, winning isolated wards and giving the party an outside chance of leading a governing coalition in the district council.

The VD analysis for the Siyanda District showed prospects for COPE to lead governing coalitions in the four councils comprising the western portion of the territory – Mier, Kai Garieb, Khara Heis and Kheis – after the 2011 election. High numbers of swing voters were also prevalent in these four councils, mainly due to significant past support for the ID. Objectives and goals were set accordingly, to enable opposition victories in these councils and to win over significant numbers of swing voters.

A win in the Khara Heis local council, which governs the province's second largest centre, the city of Upington, was considered especially important and an ambitious objective of eight seats was set there which would enable COPE to lead a governing coalition with the DA and set up an important power-bloc for the 2014 provincial elections.

Objectives in the two local councils comprising the western portion of the district – Tsantsabane and Kgatelopele – were set far less ambitiously due to low numbers of COPE base voters, high levels of ANC base votes and low swing potential.

Objectives and goals for both councils were set with an outside chance of leading a governing coalition in the district council in mind, and in the case of Tsantsabane in particular, for winning the ward comprising the township of Postdene where COPE base votes were uncharacteristically high for the area.

Objectives and goals were set for just one local council in the Frances Baard District – the Sol Plaatje local council, which governs the province's largest centre, Kimberley. Campaigns in this city are expensive relative to other smaller centres in the province due to the scale of resources needed to achieve any impact, especially in terms of visibility.

Maintaining significant support levels in the Sol Plaatje local council would be strategically important for future elections due to the size of the electorate and the focus in provincial

elections on maximizing the number of votes province-wide as opposed to proportions of the vote in individual local councils.

The three remaining local councils in the Frances Baard District – Dikgatlong, Magareng and Phokwane – all exhibited small pockets of COPE base voters spread thinly over the entire municipal area. Minor gains would be achieved at great cost to the campaign in terms of resources. High ANC base votes and low swing potential, it was recommended, meant that campaign resources would best be focused elsewhere in the province where better prospects were evident.

Similarly, no objectives and goals were set for local councils in the John Taole Gaetsewe District due to low numbers of COPE base voters prevalent in the district, high numbers of ANC base voters, low swing potential. The district also has the smallest proportion of the provincial population residing within its borders (just 4.5%).

It was recommended that the limited resources of the campaign be focused on councils, primarily in the west of the province, where COPE had prospects of leading coalition governments after the election. This would enable the party to avoid spreading its resources too thinly and to focus them in areas where a significant impact can be achieved.

By building on its base vote and consolidating significant numbers of swing voters under the COPE banner in the western district councils of Namakwa, Pixley ka Seme and Siyanda, as well as becoming a party of government in many of the local councils in these areas, COPE would be able to focus on chipping away at the ANC base vote in the eastern districts of Frances Baard and John Taole Gaetsewe in the 2014 provincial election in a bid to govern the province in coalition with the DA, it was surmised.

By following the recommendations in this chapter, COPE would have contested 21 out of 27 local councils, comprising 147 out of 194 wards in the province.

## CHAPTER 5 – A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR COPE

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Chapter is to discuss recommendations for COPE's communication strategy for the 2011 Municipal Elections in the Northern Cape. The Chapter is divided into two parts. Section 5.2 analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of COPE and the opportunities and threats (SWOT) it would face.

Section 5.3 outlines recommendations for COPE's communication strategy based on four aspects: targeting, messaging, techniques and tactics. Recommendations were made prior to the 2011 election and were based on information provided by the situation analysis, VD analysis and the setting of goals and objectives, discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.

### 5.2 SWOT ANALYSIS

In the sections to follow, COPE's strengths and weaknesses are analysed along with the opportunities and threats the party would encounter in pursuing its campaign objectives. This type of analysis is used as an aid to strategic planning and the points raised are taken into account, along with information gained from the rest of the study, in making recommendations for the communication strategy.

#### 5.2.1 Strengths

There were a number of strengths identified before the election that had the potential to contribute in varying degrees to COPE reaching its objectives. In contrast to the party's structures in other provinces, the Northern Cape had experienced relative political stability.

A total of 244 branches had been built in the province, according to the audit to decide legitimate delegates to the party's provincial conference in October 2010 (Kies, 2010c). Five regional conferences to elect regional leadership were held prior to the provincial conference.

In most cases, regional leaders were elected unopposed and no major conflicts had arisen. Similarly, the provincial leadership was elected unopposed at the provincial conference. Delegates also resolved unanimously to support Mosiuoa Lekota as president of the party nationally (Kies, 2010c).

The overwhelming support for Lekota's presidency amongst the party's membership and leaders in the province was, in large part, probably the reason for the apparent stability. In other, more contested provinces, the rivalry between factions supporting either Lekota or Shilowa had been a destructive influence on the operations of the party (this is discussed in more detail in section 5.2.2 Weaknesses).

In some cases, regional and provincial leadership structures supportive of either faction were elected at separate conferences in provinces like the North West, Eastern Cape and Western Cape, with each attempting to operate as the legitimate leadership (Dexter, 2011a).

The unity around Lekota and the focus of the Northern Cape's leadership on building local branch structures as opposed to factional conflict, allowed the party in the Northern Cape to conduct its operations in a stable environment (Rossouw, 2011). COPE's community-based branches were probably its major strength that needed to be relied on for the 2011 elections.

Given that the Northern Cape offers limited options to reach voters through mass media, the main form of voter contact is door-to-door canvassing using volunteers. Branch structures are able to provide a generous base of volunteers to work with.

The manner in which COPE was born in the province contributes to a further strength - that of a base vote in almost every voting district in the province, revealed by the VD analysis. In the aftermath of Polokwane, the ANC's established branch structures split as local leaders defected to COPE, in some cases taking entire branches with them.

These leaders formed the local campaign teams that were able to mobilize support for the party in the 2009 election on a province-wide basis, and not just in specific localities, as would be expected of a new party trying to establish itself (Mchlauli, 2010).

Also, due to the non-racial image the party tried to project at its onset in terms of rhetoric and leadership selection at national and provincial level, support was not confined to a specific racial grouping as was the case over the years with opposition parties such as the ID, which established a base in coloured communities, and the DA, which maintained a predominantly white support base in the province with sporadic coloured support, at least in the Northern Cape (Human Sciences Research Council, 2011).

Whereas the DA, as the most viable opposition party contesting alongside COPE, would attempt to make inroads into non-traditional constituencies for it in the Northern Cape, namely coloured and black-dominated communities, COPE would contest the 2011 election having already established itself in these areas (refer to Chapter 3, section 3.6.1 for a detailed discussion on support in past elections for each viable party contesting the 2011 ballot).

Through its initial inheritance of branch structures and subsequent branch-building process, COPE acquired a number of experienced politicians and local activists. A key strength of the party in the Northern Cape in the 2011 campaign would, in all probability, be this experience.

Alongside these local politicians, there were also others who had reverted back to their roots as organizers after holding high office in provincial or local government in past ANC administrations, potentially engendering confidence in their leadership at grassroots level (Wyngaard, 2010a).

While not all of these people were likely to have had perfect track records, this experience, it appeared, would translate into a number of benefits for the party. Firstly, knowledge of campaigning leads to agency from the ground in conceiving and organizing campaign activities. Secondly, there were parts of the campaigning culture inherited from the ANC that could be put to good use under the COPE banner.

Particularly the culture of singing and the creative use of lyrics to convey political messages as well as the ability to address mass meetings appeared to form a useful aspect of COPE's political culture, it was observed during by-elections leading up to the election.

It must be said, however, that while many of the aforementioned people and others may be experienced campaigners, they are not necessarily experienced campaign strategists or managers.

Closely related, was the established profiles its provincial leadership. Many of them have developed reputations over decades. For example, Pakes Dikgetsi was a member of the provincial cabinet for 15 years as well as a founder member of COSATU and the United Democratic Front (UDF), a civil society coalition that campaigned for a democratic South Africa in the 1980's (Dikgetsi, 2011).

Fred Wyngaard is a well-known figure in parts of Namaqualand where he served as a district mayor and oversaw the electrification and provision of access to water in many parts of the district that had never been serviced before (Wyngaard, 2010a).

The aforementioned leaders had acquired a workable knowledge of their constituencies and would, in all likelihood, still be capable of drawing crowds to community meetings. This applied also to the party's President, Mosioua Lekota, who was popular in the Northern Cape, probably due to his accommodating approach to minorities and his fluency in all the languages predominant within its borders.

Lekota had consistently drawn crowds on his visits to the province making him an asset that would need to have been exploited in the 2011 election campaign in order to drum up further support for the party (Kies, 2010b).

### **5.2.2 Weaknesses**

There were a number of apparent fundamental weaknesses the party would have needed to overcome if it was to achieve its campaign objectives. Not the least of these was the damaged image and credibility the party had sustained after close on two years of factional conflict between those aligned to the party's former Deputy President, Mbhazima Shilowa, and its President, Mosioua Lekota.

Le Roux (2010) notes that the conflict between Shilowa and Lekota began as early as the party's formation in 2008. The decision to use the unknown Reverend Mvume Dandala as

the party's presidential candidate in the 2009 election was, apparently, a result of a compromise on disagreement on who should be the face of the party (Le Roux, 2010:142).

A series of resignations by the party's national leadership had also created the impression in the media that it was either a sinking ship or that its leaders were too concerned with their own self-interest to pursue a career in opposition politics. Simon Grindrod, Lynda Odendaal, Fana Hlongwane, Alan Boesak, and Mvume Dandala were some of the more high-profile resignations as Lekota and Shilowa's destructive battle waged on.

The premise of this line of reporting was that achieving just 7% of the vote and 30 seats in parliament in the 2009 elections, lower than what was forecast by many, had made the limitations clear of what COPE could offer its leaders in terms of a financial income.

In contrast to life in the ANC, a limited number of seats in legislatures as well as no representation in local councils due to the party being formed prior to a national and not a municipal election, meant that very few public representatives could be provided with a sustainable income, nor could COPE afford to pay a large number of salaries from its own coffers (Ngamlana, n.d.).

Meanwhile, factionalism appeared to deepen in the party. Shilowa attempted to hold a congress in May before the constitutionally required proportion of branches had been launched. He received the buy-in of the Lekota faction on the basis of an agreement that it would be a policy and not elective congress.

Shilowa attempted to change the status of the event to an elective conference from the floor after which Lekota abandoned the venue and Shilowa claimed the presidency of the party for the first time.

A series of court battles between Shilowa and Lekota followed that put the party in major debt from legal costs and exposed it to the scorn of the press. All in all, the battle to be recognized as the party's leader was waged over the course of 11 court cases, culminating in an interim interdict by the Gauteng High court against Mbhazima Shilowa representing himself as the party's President (Palm, 2010).

This war of attrition had severely affected the party's communication with the public and subsequently the prevailing impressions of the party. Press statements, rather than advocating on issues pertinent to the public as is expected of a political party, often focused on the internal struggle in COPE, giving the impression of self-absorption and pettiness (Dexter, 2010).

Another elective conference held in December 2010, just six months before the 2011 elections, was a spectacular public relations disaster for the party. Reports on the event focused on violence and in-fighting as delegates were hospitalized amidst continuous chair throwing and scuffles at the venue. Lekota and Shilowa also came to blows at one point. Descriptive language in the press intensified after this event, with the term "COPE's warring factions" (own emphasis) being used more regularly (Mbanjwa, 2010).

The result of this series of unfortunate events for COPE was that its dominant image nationally became one of a party in collapse. Just how much traction on the ground this would have amongst voters in the Northern Cape would be tested at the polls in the 2011 election, with the primary mitigating factor being the strength of the party's grassroots activists and their roles in their communities.

The second major weakness of the party was its minimal funding in relation to its competitors. The national leadership crisis had all but dried up the funds coming in from sympathetic donors on a national level. In the province, there was no concerted fundraising strategy from the provincial leadership to lessen the dependency on state funding to run its operations prior to the 2011 elections (Van Niekerk, 2010).

It was likely that the party would contest the 2011 election in the Northern Cape with funding from two sources. First, the provincial legislature's political party fund (refer to Chapter three, section 3.2.6) will provide an annual allocation to COPE, according to its representation in the legislature and the budget for the 2011/12 financial year.

Second, donors on a municipal level would be needed to make material or financial contributions to local campaigns. These donors, the party reasoned, were likely to be white commercial farmers prepared to fund any viable opponent to the ANC (Van Niekerk, 2010). A natural drawback for this funding option is that COPE would need to compete with the

DA, a party that enjoys the support of these farmers, for the limited resources they are able to provide.

It was surmised before the election that these sources could, in all likelihood, provide sufficient money to get the message across, but only if used prudently and strategically. It will however, pale in comparison to the ANC and the DA's expected campaign budgets. The extra money these parties have can be put to use in a number of advantageous ways (refer to section 5.2.4).

### **5.2.3 Opportunities**

Despite these challenges, there were a number of opportunities that could be exploited by the campaign strategy. Not the least of these opportunities was to take advantage of the prospects for winning municipalities in the province by running a targeted campaign.

Most notably, Khara Heis which governs Upington, several councils in the Namakwa district including the district council itself, and parts of the Pixley ka Seme district, were revealed by the VD analysis to be within striking distance of winning for a COPE-led coalition government (refer to section 4.2 and Appendix 2).

Meeting objectives by adhering to a well-conceived targeting strategy would have enabled the party to confidently reassert itself as the official opposition in the province by staying ahead of the DA in terms of councils won in 2011. The added benefit in achieving this is the surprise that it cause amongst national media, potentially leading to a period of positive momentum for the party generated by the low expectations in the press for COPE faring well in the 2011 election, as discussed in section 4.4.2.

Looking forward to 2014, a win in Khara Heis, the second largest council in terms of registered voters in the province, could potentially have set the scene for a further swing come the provincial elections as opposition voters become more energized to get to the polls and vote due to a belief in the potential for an opposition party to win a provincial election.

The additional votes would seriously begin to put the province in jeopardy for the ANC, especially if COPE is able to turn the municipalities it can win into models of good

governance. The impression this would have created in the face of a general failure of local governance in the province cannot be underestimated in the eyes of the voter.

The VD analysis also revealed an opportunity evident in the unique political landscape in the Northern Cape. Heavily canvassing former ID voters who formed a large part of the swing vote was an option available only for the window period of the 2011 election campaign due to the absence of the ID from the ballot and the probability that all parties would compete heavily for these votes.

While the DA would use Patricia De Lille, the ID's Leader, to campaign on behalf of the party (discussed in more detail under threats), it was apparent prior to the 2011 election that no ID symbols or colours would be used in the DA's campaign material, nor would the ID be acknowledged explicitly in the DA's campaign messaging (DA, 2011a).

Considering that many ID voters may have remained attached to the brand and would not necessarily approve of De Lille joining a party she had previously campaigned against, the opportunity existed for COPE to woo these former ID voters, turned swing voters.

Many local politicians who had formerly been leaders of the party would also be potentially dissatisfied with the merger either because they did not feel comfortable in the DA as a political home, or because they been forced to forfeit their positions as candidates or political leaders in the newly merged structure.

The creative incorporation of colours into COPE campaign material, like flyers for example, as well as the inclusion of direct appeals toward former ID voters in campaign messaging could potentially succeed in winning over significant numbers of these swing voters, it was reasoned prior to the election.

ANC voters were likely to be vulnerable to persuasion as well due to the party's delivery record. As an incumbent in every municipality in the province, scepticism of how well the party has performed in government would naturally be a factor amongst voters in each locality.

Prior to the 2011 election, the most recent available Auditor-General's Report on the audit outcomes of Northern Cape municipalities found that 19 of 32 councils received a disclaimer audit

opinion from the AG. Thirteen municipalities show serious signs of not being sustainable for the future should their financial situation continue along a similar trajectory (Auditor-General, 2010).

A lack of proper management in local government leads to problems with the effective delivery of services to communities. Local COPE politicians and activists, as members of the communities in which the party would contest, would likely have sufficient local knowledge of burning issues in each locality to exploit the failures of the ANC by conveying COPE's campaign message through various themes like the delivery of basic services, job creation and housing provision.

This local knowledge would need to be supported with research from the provincial campaign organization that contextualized the extent of the ANC's mismanagement at the expense of communities. If COPE could exploit the failures of the ANC in an effective way in its communication strategy, there would have been a chance to win over some of the ANC's base voters where the targeting strategy would require this, it was surmised.

The VD analysis also revealed a situation in certain councils where COPE had a very high base vote and some prospects for governing in comparison to weak local DA support. In these instances, it may have been possible to canvass the DA's traditional constituency, the white voter. Were the campaign to effectively succeed in informing this voter of the DA's minimal prospects locally based on the party's 2009 performance, it may have been possible to persuade some white voters to back COPE on an anti-ANC ticket.

Regarding the media, opportunities to exploit earned media coverage existed for a number of community and commercial media options. All community radio and print publications in the Namakwa district; community radio in the Khara Heis municipality; and commercial print publications in the east of the province, and the Sol Plaatje council in particular, all showed a willingness to grant significant room in their content for political news, with press releases from COPE being no exception (refer to Chapter 3, section 3.5).

Due to the limited campaign resources COPE would have for the 2011 elections, the opportunity also needed to be exploited to canvass donors in individual municipalities to assist the various local campaigns. Good relationships with local farmers could result in not

only donations, but also assistance in reaching small yet significant pockets of voters living on privately-owned, largely inaccessible land.

#### **5.2.4 Threats**

There were a number of threats to COPE successfully achieving the objectives that emanated both from within the party as well as its external environment. Besides the spending power of the ANC as a larger party with established donors, the ANC is also able to make use of its position as an incumbent in provincial and local government to further its campaign.

In the run up to elections, government programmes appear to be used as campaign activities by the ANC, allowing the party to reach its target voters at the expense of the state. This was notable in the period leading up to the by-elections observed for this study.

Two weeks prior to 25 August 2010, Election Day for the by-elections, the Departments of Health, Social Development and Office of the Premier in particular, ran extensive programmes in the contested wards in both De Aar and Petrusville.

The Department of Health ran a stop TB campaign three days before Election Day in both towns, reportedly making use of loudhailers and government vehicles to publicize the ANC candidate's appearance at the site of the programme (Havenga, 2010).

The Department of Social Development made extensive use of volunteers and paid staff, regardless of their core responsibilities, to run a mass canvassing operation alongside local ANC volunteers. In both wards under the guise of the Department's census-like Balelapa survey, which aims to identify the nature of poverty on a province-wide basis in order to provide appropriate social services.

The Office of the Premier used Women's Day on 9 August 2010 to hold the official provincial celebrations in the Petrusville ward. The ANC's candidate was paraded on stage shortly before the Premier spoke. All of these events were the subject of a complaint to the Public Protector by COPE at the time.

The complaint also included information revealed in a parliamentary question to the Office of the Premier by COPE MPL Pakes Dikgetsi, showing that the Premier had run “cabinet-meets-the-people” programmes in contested wards on the eve of the last four consecutive by-elections held in the province prior to those observed for this study. These events essentially enabled the entire provincial executive to travel to contested wards and campaign at the taxpayer’s expense (Wyngaard, 2011b).

For the 2011 elections, the Office of the Premier announced the release of R10 million to fifteen “struggling municipalities” that it claimed needed “urgent assistance”. In all 15 councils, the ANC polled 55% or less in the 2009 election. No municipality where the party polled higher were given this funding, according to a COPE press release at the time (Wyngaard, 2011b).

The use of incumbency also extends to the ability to make promises pertaining to service delivery before an election, such as the rollout of basic services and housing. An incumbent’s promises provide the incentive of imminent delivery to the public after the election should they vote the same party back into power.

According to many local COPE leaders spoken to for this study, the promises of the ANC are often coupled with the threat that these services will not be delivered to individuals who vote against the party, which amounts to an intimidatory form of misinformation (De Wee, 2011; Julies, 2010; Van Wyk, 2010).

While the DA presented the natural threat of competition to COPE, the major threat to the campaign was the possibility of splitting the opposition vote in particular localities where COPE’s support was strong enough to set a winning objective for the party in the local council. This possibility existed in Khai ma, Thembilihle, ward three in Siyancuma municipality, ward one in Ubuntu municipality and a number of wards in Khara Heis.

Also, the DA’s use of Patricia De Lille and Helen Zille to campaign in the province in an attempt to solidify the merger by consolidating the ID vote under the DA banner was considered to pose the threat of COPE losing swing voters important for achieving objectives set in a number of key councils.

While the DA and ID had a formal agreement for cooperation that would eventually result in a merger at national level, COPE needed to take advantage of the opportunity to canvass former ID voters in a compelling way as part of its communication strategy in the absence of any formal arrangement between the parties.

A further threat emanating from the external environment was the portrayal of COPE, especially in the national media. Analysts consistently reinforce the image of a party in collapse, while the mentioning of the party's name is regularly attached to the prefix "the embattled" or "the beleaguered" (Molathlwa, 2011).

Closely related was the threat of being ignored by the national media, in contrast to the extensive coverage of its viable opponents. An analysis of the 2009 election television coverage of political parties by the SABC revealed that COPE received a generous portion of total coverage: 17% (Media Monitoring Africa, 2009).

This level of coverage had all but dissipated in the run up to the 2011 election, prompting the party to lay a complaint with the Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa, claiming that it was being systematically excluded from television news bulletins (Killian, 2011).

The major threat emanating from within COPE was the lack of support the party was likely to receive in the Northern Cape from its national structure, in contrast to the ANC and DA. Given the financial situation of the party (refer to section 5.2.2), very little support in terms of campaign resources would come from COPE's national structure.

Whereas the DA was able to supplement its canvassing with centralized call centres designed to reach target voters across the country, COPE would have had to rely entirely on face to face canvassing (Boyle, 2011).

Whereas both the ANC and the DA would benefit from receiving all their election posters already attached to backing boards from their national structures, as was the case in past elections, COPE was required to fund the printing and assembling of posters entirely on a provincial level which would stress all three resources of time, people and money.

Closely-related was the non-professional nature of the COPE campaign organization at a national level. This, it was surmised, would affect the deployment of national leadership for campaign activities in the province due to the lack of a targeting strategy to highlight priority areas (Dexter, 2010).

As a result, the importance of availing leaders to service some areas in the Northern Cape for the purpose of generating wins that would benefit the party nationally, were likely to be lost on those running the campaign on a national level. Scheduling is a precise discipline and if small details such as flight times are not probably adhered to, national leaders may not arrive for important campaign events such as rallies.

Having discussed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that COPE would face in the 2011 election, recommendations for a communication strategy designed to enable the campaign to achieve the objectives set for are made in the section to follow.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations to follow were made prior to the 2011 elections for the purpose of the communication strategy to be used for COPE's election campaign in the Northern Cape. Recommendations for four specific aspects of a communication strategy are included in the sections below: targeting, messaging, techniques and tactics.

Aspects of a communication strategy not falling within the limits of recommendations for this study - namely budgeting and fundraising; the campaign organization; and campaign schedule – are nevertheless taken into account given the systemic nature of election campaigns.

#### **5.3.1 Targeting**

Target VD's are those where the highest vote goals were set in order to achieve the campaign objectives in a given local or district council. The higher the vote goal in a VD, the more a campaign is required to focus its resources there in order to win votes in sufficient numbers to achieve the objective.

The setting of VD vote goals and the determining of target VD's are not separate linear processes. Rather, VD vote goals are set with the intention of prioritizing some VD's over others based on the predicted turnout, COPE base voters and swing voters in each. These factors determine the prospects of winning votes in a VD in order to achieve the municipal vote goal and subsequently the objective set in terms of seats for a given council.

Target VD's for each district are displayed in the tables to follow. Summary tables are provided to show the concentration for each local and district council in target VD's. A narrative for each table is also provided. For the rationale behind targeting specific VD's over others, refer to Chapter 4, section 4.2.

### 5.3.1.1 Namakwa district

**Table 5.3.1.1a Target VD's in Namakwa district**

Vote goal	VD Name	Council
842	OKIEP CIVIC HALL	Nama Khoi
650	HANTAM SPORTSGROUND	Hantam
630	MUNICIPAL WORKSHOP (portion)	Hantam
600	GEMEENSKAPSENTRUM	Karoo Hoogland
600	BLYVOORUITSIG GEMEENSKAPSAAL (portion)	Khai ma
570	KOMAGGAS COMMUNITY HALL	Nama Khoi
520	GEMEENSKAPSAAL LOERIESFONTEIN	Hantam
518	STEINKOPF COMMUNITY HALL	Nama Khoi
500	VG KERKSAAL	Karoo Hoogland
493	BERGSIG ROMAN CATHOLIC HALL (portion)	Nama Khoi
461	PAROGIESAAL MATJIESKLOOF	Nama Khoi
351	GARIES GEMEENSKAPSAAL	Kamiesberg
347	BERGSIG LIBRA HALL (portion)	Nama Khoi
331	ALPHA RAADSAAL	Kamiesberg
322	STEINKOPF IMMANUEL HALL	Nama Khoi
300	FATHER BUTLER HALL	Richtersveld
300	ROGGEVELD PRIMARY SCHOOL	Karoo Hoogland
280	COMMUNITY HALL BRANDVLEI	Hantam
273	NABABEEP ST CYPRIANS PRIMARY SCHOOL	Nama Khoi

252	NABABEEP RECREATION CLUB (portion)	Nama Khoi
250	SIZAMILE CLINIC HALL	Richtersveld
200	CONCORDIA GEMEENSKAPSENTRUM	Nama Khoi
198	SANDDRIFT COMMUNITY HALL	Richtersveld
182	COMMUNITY HALL KROONSIG	Kamiesberg
156	AGGENEYS PRIMARY SCHOOL	Khai ma
153	LELIEFONTEIN GEMEENSKAPSAAL	Kamiesberg
130	ST PHILOMEN SKOOLSAAL	Khai ma
128	KHEIS GEMEENSKAPSAAL	Kamiesberg
101	MELKBOSRAND	Khai ma
101	BLYVOORUITSIG GEMEENSKAPSAAL (portion)	Khai ma
100	BUFFELSRIVIER COMMUNITY HALL	Nama Khoi

**Table 5.3.1.1b Summary of target VD's per Namakwa council**

Target VD's per council				
Council	Targeted	Total	Votes in Target VD's	Vote goals per council
Richtersveld	3	8	748	889
Nama Khoi	11	24	4378	4740
Kamiesberg	5	16	1145	1661
Hantam	4	22	2080	2289
Karoo Hoogland	3	18	1400	1635
Khai ma	5	13	1088	1714
<b>Namakwa district totals</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>10839</b>	<b>12928</b>

Of the 101 VD's that make up the Namakwa district, 84% of the total vote goal for the district is located in just 31 target VD's. For the most part, VD vote goals were set higher in VD's comprising the medium to larger centres relative to each council. This would enable the campaign to avoid expensive forays into large swathes of farmland as well as tiny hamlets that are distant from the larger centres of each council.

Only in councils where it was unavoidable, were significant portions of the vote goal set in the rural surrounds of the main municipal centres. This was most notably the case in councils with small populations where COPE needed to canvass nearly all voters in order to

achieve an objective that allowed it to govern in coalition - Kamiesberg and Karoo Hoogland are examples of this.

In the Richtersveld in particular, the slim chances of leading a governing coalition in the council after the 2011 elections, and the inactivity of party structures in many areas, influenced the setting of the vote goal primarily in just two of the council's four main centres.

Due to the dispersion of the Namakwa population into small but significant populations of voters, VD's requiring a vote goal of 100 votes or more were considered as targets in contrast to other districts where 200 votes or more was considered a threshold to label a VD as targeted.

VD's with the highest vote goals of 600 or more are located in the larger councils of Nama Khoi and Hantam, as well as the smaller council of Karoo Hoogland due to the large numbers of base voters evident in the latter's main centres. Nama Khoi has the highest concentration target VD's in terms of the vote goal for a local council in Namakwa – 37% of the district total.

It was surmised that achieving the vote goal in each local council in Namakwa would, in all probability, enable COPE to lead governing coalitions in the district council as well as all local councils except Richtersveld.

#### 5.3.1.2 Pixley ka Seme district

Table 5.3.1.2a Target VD's in Pixley ka Seme district

Vote goal	VD Name	Council
900	OMEGA COMMUNITY HALL	Siyathemba
900	CHURCH OF CHRIST MISSION	Siyancuma
650	LOWRYVILLE COMMUNITY HALL	Umsobomvu
650	BREIPAAL GEMEENSKAPSAAL	Siyancuma
580	STEYNVILLE COMMUNITY HALL	Thembelihle

550	DR ESSOP COMMUNITY HALL	Thembilihle
540	MARYDALE GEMEENSKAPSAAL	Siyathemba
500	KARRIKAMMA HOËRSKOOL	Siyancuma
460	NOMZAMO COM HALL-SABELO	Ubuntu
450	VANWYKSVLEI GEMEENSKAPSAAL	Kareeberg
400	JJ CLAASEN HALL	Umsobomvu
400	CHURCH ASSEMBLY OF GOD	Emthanjeni
400	TOWN HALL PHILIPSTOWN	Renosterberg
400	ORANJE DIAMANT SEKONDÊRE SKOOL (portion)	Thembilihle
380	NG KERK HALL UITSIG (portion)	Renosterberg
370	DEPARTEMENT JUSTISIE/OPENBARE WERKE	Kareeberg
320	OU SKOUGRONDESAAI (portion)	Ubuntu
320	PROTEAVILLE COMMUNITY HALL	Emthanjeni
300	JJ CLAASEN HALL	Umsobomvu
280	DE AAR TOWN HALL	Emthanjeni
280	KWEZI COMMUNITY HALL	Emthanjeni
250	KAREEVILLE SCHOOL	Emthanjeni
230	NONZWAKAZI COMMUNITY HALL	Emthanjeni
200	CIVIC CENTRE DE AAR EAST (portion)	Emthanjeni
200	VANDERKLOOF STADSAAL	Renosterberg

**Table 5.3.1.1b Summary of target VD's per Pixley ka Seme council**

Target VD's per council				
Council	Targeted	Total	Votes in Target VD's	Vote goals per council
Ubuntu	2	24	780	1284
Umsobomvu	3	25	1350	2289

Emthanjeni	7	28	1960	2820
Kareeberg	2	15	820	1104
Renosterberg	3	15	980	1825
Thembilihle	3	14	1530	2094
Siyathemba	2	18	1440	3097
Siyancuma	3	28	2050	3587
Pixley ka Seme district totals	25	167	10910	18100

Of the 167 voting districts that make up the Pixley ka Seme district, 60% of the total vote in the district is concentrated in just 25 target VD's. The remaining 40% is dispersed in numbers of less than 200 per VD vote goal in the remainder of the VD's in the district.

Target VD's in the eastern portion of this district, comprising the councils of Thembilihle, Siyathemba, Renosterberg, had vote goals set for the purpose of leading governing coalitions in these councils.

Vote goals in all other councils were either set either for the purpose of winning specific wards or making a meaningful contribution to the possibility that existed of governing the district council as well as increasing proportions of the vote in seemingly unwinnable local councils. Target VD's in the Umsobomvu, Siyancuma and Ubuntu local councils in particular have vote goals set for the purpose of winning specific wards these councils.

As is the case with the Namakwa district, the main centres in each local council were generally favoured to be target VD's with larger vote goals set for them. Pixley ka Seme is the largest of districts with vast stretches of farmland. Small pockets of voters in these areas are difficult and expensive to reach due to a lack of road infrastructure and the transport costs of reaching these places.

### 5.3.1.3 Siyanda district

Table 5.3.1.2a Target VD's in Siyanda district

Vote goal	VD Name	Council
700	SENIOR SEKONDÊRE SKOOL KAKAMAS	Kai Garieb
950	HOËRSKOOL KENHARDT	Kai Garieb

730	PROGRESS CIVIC HALL (portion)	Khara Heis
650	EVANGELIESE LUTHERSE KERK	Khara Heis
650	METHODISTE KERK	Khara Heis
650	S C KEARNS	Khara Heis
550	BISKOP FAGES HALL	Kai Garieb
550	LOUISVALE CIVIC (portion)	Khara Heis
550	POSTDENE COMMUNITY CENTRE	Tsantsabane
500	BUILDING VAALKROEK (portion)	Khara Heis
500	POSTDENE PRIMARY SCHOOL	Tsantsabane
450	WESTERKIM PRIMARY SCHOOL	Khara Heis
450	NUWE HOOP CENTRE (portion)	Kheis
400	CHRISTEN GEMEENTES (ND SWARTZ)	Khara Heis
400	GROOTDRINK GEMEENSKAPSAAL	Kheis
390	NUWE HOOP CENTRE (portion)	Kheis
380	LANDBOERWE (T)	Kgatelopele
350	RIETFONTEIN COMMUNITY HALL	Mier
350	ORANJE-SUID LAERSKOOL	Kai Garieb
330	STADSAAL	Kgatelopele
300	ASKAM COMMUNITY HALL (portion)	Mier
300	AUGRABIES RK SENDING LAERSKOOL	Kai Garieb
280	MANNE DIPICO COMMUNITY HALL	Kheis
250	ACTS MISSION CHURCH	Khara Heis
200	LOUBOS COMMUNITY HALL	Mier
200	PHILANDERSBRON PRIMARY SCHOOL	Mier

**Table 5.3.1.1b Summary of target VD's per Siyanda council**

Target VD's per council
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Council	Targeted	Total	Votes in Target VD's	Vote goals per council
Mier	4	12	1050	1366
Kai Garieb	6	38	3000	4548
Khara Heis	9	32	6175	8004
Kheis	4	14	1730	2013
Tsantsabane	2	24	1050	1409
Kgatelopele	2	7	710	1186
Siyanda district totals	27	127	13715	18526

Of the 127 VD's that make up the Siyanda district, 74% of the total vote goal for the district is concentrated in just 27 target VD's. The remaining 26% is dispersed amongst the other 100 VD's in numbers of less than 200 per VD vote goal set.

The Khara Heis local council, which governs the second largest provincial centre of Upington, was set vote goals that would allow the campaign to target just 9 VD's out of the total of 32.

These VD's primarily comprise the coloured-dominated townships of Rosedale, Louisvale and Progress. Targeting these places allow campaign resources to be concentrated centrally within the city without having to chase small pockets of voters in the surrounding countryside that falls within the council's borders.

Khara Heis and Kai Garieb, as the two largest councils in the district, collectively have 15 target VD's making up 50% of the total vote goal needed for the district. These two councils, together with the other two where the VD analysis showed COPE to be within striking of leading a governing coalition, Kheis and Mier, have target VD's that collectively account for 65% of the total district vote goal.

The two councils forming the eastern portion of the district, Tsantsabane and Kgatelopele, were not prioritized in terms of target VD's and vote goals due to the dominance of the ANC in those areas and the minimal prospects for COPE, evident in the VD analysis.

Target VD's in Tsantsabane were set mainly for the purpose of winning a ward seat in the area comprising Postdene, a coloured-dominated township in Postmasburg. VD's were

targeted in Danielskuil mainly due to a fair-sized COPE base vote and the contribution the vote goals could make to the overall district total.

#### 5.1.3.4 Frances Baard district

Table 5.3.1.2a Target VD's in Frances Baard district

Vote goal	VD Name	Council
1100	GREENPOINT HIGH SCHOOL	Sol Plaatje
790	COLVILLE COMMUNITY HALL	Sol Plaatje
550	HOMELITE SQUARE	Sol Plaatje
500	DU TOITSPAN PRIMARY SCHOOL	Sol Plaatje
450	LUCRETIA PRIMARY SCHOOL	Sol Plaatje
420	STOCKROOS CIVIC CENTRE	Sol Plaatje
400	HOMEVALE PRIMARY SCHOOL	Sol Plaatje
400	RIETVALE	Sol Plaatje
350	LUCRETIA PRIMARY SCHOOL	Sol Plaatje
350	PESCODIA SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL	Sol Plaatje
340	LETSHEGO PRIMARY SCHOOL	Sol Plaatje
330	PERSEVERANCE COLLEGE	Sol Plaatje
320	DR EPLEKHELA SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL	Sol Plaatje
320	NG CHURCH HALL	Sol Plaatje
320	TETLANYO SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL	Sol Plaatje
300	MANKURWANE PRIMARY SCHOOL	Sol Plaatje
250	RC ELLIOT	Sol Plaatje

250	MASIZA PRIMARY SCHOOL	Sol Plaatje
250	GREENPOINT PRIMARY SCHOOL	Sol Plaatje
250	ROODEPAN PRIMARY SCHOOL	Sol Plaatje
230	ISAGO PRIMARY SCHOOL	Sol Plaatje
220	NEWTON PRIMARY SCHOOL	Sol Plaatje
220	3 SAI	Sol Plaatje
200	KEVIN NKOANE PRIMARY SCHOOL (portion)	Sol Plaatje
200	SKILPADSAAL (SHOW GROUNDS)	Sol Plaatje

**Table 5.3.1.2b Summary of target VD's per Frances Baard council**

Target VD's per council				
Council	Targeted VD's	Total VD's	Votes in Target VD's	Vote goals per council
Sol Plaatje	25	72	9310	13999
Dikgatlong	0	28	0	0
Magareng	0	17	0	0
Phokwane	0	25	0	0
<b>Frances Baard District Totals</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>9310</b>	<b>13999</b>

Of the 142 VD's in the Frances Baard district, 67% of the total vote goal for the district is located in just 25 target VD's. All 25 of these VD's are located in the Sol Plaatje local council, which governs the largest provincial centre of Kimberley.

Due to minimal campaign resources and minimal prospects that could be exploited in the rest of the district, objectives and vote goals were not set for the remaining three local councils of Dikgatlong, Magareng and Phokwane.

It was reasoned that campaigning in Kimberley, which is too big in terms of its registered population and importance for future elections to ignore, would be sufficient to maintain

presence in the district while chasing the real prospects for governing in the Namakwa, Pixley ka Seme and Siyanda districts. Doing this would avoid costly campaigns in the ANC-dominated rural towns and villages in Frances Baard.

In the Sol Plaatje local council, 25 of the 72 VD's were targeted due to vote goals of more than 200 votes being set for each. The VD comprising the settlement of Greenpoint was allocated the highest vote goal due to the ward being within striking distance of COPE winning. The 48 non-targeted VD's contain 33% of the municipal vote goal dispersed into vote goals of less than 200 per VD.

#### *5.3.1.5 John Taole Gaetsewe district*

Due to this district having the smallest proportion of the population in the province relative to others, as well as the highest base votes for the ANC and the lowest for COPE than anywhere else, it was reasoned that setting objectives in this district would be a waste of campaign resources.

Prospects elsewhere, especially in the west of the province, should be prioritized above this district, it was reasoned. As a result of this, no target VD's are found in this district.

Having discussed the VD's to be targeted on a province-wide basis, recommendations for province-specific messaging to target voters are made in the section to follow.

#### **5.3.2 Messaging**

As discussed in Chapter 3 (refer to section 3.4.1), COPE's national structure was in charge of developing a campaign message for the party nationally, to be delivered in the nine provinces.

COPE's message for the 2011 campaign was encapsulated in the slogan "the time for change is now". Put simply, COPE, as a "partner for real change", would involve communities in "development" as a solution to the "state of crisis" local government is in under the ANC due to "incapable management and corruption" (COPE, 2011).

This study considered messaging as far as whether additional specific provincial messages were needed, if any, in order to tailor campaign communication to target voters more effectively.

Given the need to prevent any conflicts that may confuse the public, recommendations for provincial messaging for the Northern Cape were based on the need to complement, rather than contradict or ignore, the national message.

The VD analysis revealed large numbers of swing voters in local councils where COPE was within striking distance leading a governing coalition after the 2011 election, based on the party's 2009 results. These local councils were: Richtersveld, Nama Khoi, Kamiesberg, Hantam, Mier, Kai Garieb, Khara Heis and Kheis (refer to Chapter 4, sections 4.2.1.1 – 4.2.1.4 and 4.2.3.1 – 4.2.3.4 for an analysis of each council and Appendix 2 for the VD analysis data).

Collectively these councils amounted to eight of the 13 for which objectives were set. A closer look the 2009 results for each of these eight councils reveals that the ID performed better there compared to its results in the remainder of councils in the Northern Cape, as the table below illustrates.

*Table 5.3.2 2009 Results per party in councils where objectives were set*

<b>Council</b>	<b>COPE</b>	<b>ANC</b>	<b>DA</b>	<b>ID</b>
Richtersveld	17%	46%	10%	25%
Nama Khoi	17%	47%	16%	19%
Kamiesberg	23%	44%	10%	21%
Hantam	18%	40%	22%	16%
Karoo Hoogland	30%	31%	27%	3%
Khai Ma	33%	50%	11%	3%
Ubuntu	22%	48%	26%	1%
Umsombovu	21%	66%	6%	4%
Emthanjeni	14%	59%	14%	10%
Kareeberg	18%	54%	22%	3%
Renosterberg	20%	55%	18%	2%
Thembihle	31%	50%	11%	1%
Siyathemba	30%	56%	10%	1%
Siyancuma	22%	62%	12%	0%
Mier	24%	55%	3%	16%

Kai Garieb	18%	51%	14%	14%
Khara Heis	22%	52%	14%	9%
Kheis	26%	54%	5%	10%
Tsantsabane	17%	68%	10%	1%
Kgatelopele	17%	63%	12%	2%
Sol Plaatje	14%	70%	9%	3%

Based on the methodology used for the VD analysis (refer to Chapter 2, section 2.4.2.1), the swing vote in these eight councils reflects primarily former ID voters who were required to make a choice between the parties contesting the 2011 election in the absence of their party on the ballot.

The analysis of past election results as part of the Situation Analysis (refer to Chapter 3, section 3.6.1) also revealed the probability that most ID voters in the Northern Cape had been voting for opposition parties in almost all past elections, some possibly even since the first democratic election in 1994.

Based on past voting behaviour, it was surmised that in the 2011 election these voters, should they arrive at the polls, would again make a choice between one of the two opposition parties on the ballot – either COPE or the DA.

As discussed in the SWOT analysis, a major threat for COPE prior to the election was the probability that the DA would use the former ID leader Patricia De Lille to campaign in some of the areas where these voters resided in an attempt to consolidate the swing vote under the DA banner.

The opportunity that existed for COPE was that these voters would also possibly feel abandoned and alienated due to the DA's decision not to include ID symbols or colours in election campaign material, as well as not to refer to the ID or its voters in the party's campaign messaging (refer to sections 5.2.3 – 5.2.4).

Winning over these swing voters in significant numbers was regarded as essential for reaching vote goals in the targeted VD's in the eight councils. It is also apparent from *Table 5.3.2* that, with the exception of the Hantam local council, COPE's 2009 result was higher

than the DA's in each of these councils. The following message was therefore developed for the purpose of winning over these swing voters:

*"Another five years of the ANC in charge is a lifetime too long. Only if COPE and ID supporters stand together in this election will it be possible to remove the ANC from power in this council. By voting COPE we can govern together to the benefit of the community."*

This message was recommended as a means to complement the "time for change is now" narrative. The premise behind it is that COPE and ID supporters, collectively, would form a greater bastion of opposition support than if ID voters were to throw their lot in with the DA, based on the outcome of the most recent election.

In short, if people wanted to see change in the 2011 election, the best way to ensure an opposition victory would be to unite under the COPE banner. Given that ID voters, now forming the majority of the swing vote prior to the 2011 election, were traditional opposition voters, the message does not attempt to attack the ANC as persuasion against supporting this party is not the primary point that needed to be made to these voters.

The message, it was surmised, instead acknowledges these voters and affirms their value to a cause. They are offered a choice based on the facts of the most recent election results. Given that the DA would be able to speak of a track record in government and a set of policies which that have implemented where the party governs, neither of which COPE would be able to do, the message attempts to shift the focus toward the odds of establishing a coalition government where voters live.

Voters are reminded of the consequences of not "standing together" through the phrase "another five years of the ANC in charge is a lifetime too long". Local politicians would be able to reinforce this through various localized themes that emphasize the failures of the ANC as an incumbent in a particular council.

The outcome of a unified vote is emphasized in the need to "govern together to the benefit of our community". This also affirms the notion of people-driven local governance expressed in the national COPE message.

For the message to be effective, it was recommended, two things would need to be accomplished by COPE's campaign organization. First, the party through various campaign techniques would need to create the impression in the localities this message needed to reach that COPE was indeed a serious contender for power in the council (this is discussed in detail in section 5.3.3).

Secondly, volunteers and local politicians would need to be sufficiently informed of the balance of support for the ANC, COPE and DA in their council based on the 2009 election results. The task would fall upon these people to ensure that people were aware of the real possibility that power could change hands to the opposition after the 2011 elections and, also, that swing voters were persuaded that a vote for COPE, as opposed to the DA, would ensure a better chance of this happening.

Having discussed recommendations for COPE's provincial-specific messaging, recommendations for the techniques that needed to be used to reach target voters with the campaign's messages are outlined in the section to follow.

### **5.3.3 Techniques**

Recommendations made prior to the 2011 election on the various techniques that would need to be used to reach target voters with COPE's campaign message are discussed in this section on a district by district. Four districts are discussed: Namakwa, Pixley ka Seme, Siyanda and Frances Baard. The province's fifth district, John Taole Gaetsewe, is not discussed because no objectives, vote goals or target VD's were set for this district.

In making these recommendations, the theory of campaign messaging and techniques (refer to Chapter 2, sections 2.5.1 – 2.5.2); the analysis of provincial media as part of the Situation Analysis (refer to Chapter 3, section 3.5); as well as the recommendations for targeting and messaging (refer to sections 5.3.1 – 5.3.2) were taken into account.

#### **5.3.3.1 Namakwa district**

Community media in this district is not only popular with the locals, it also faces almost no competition for their attention from commercial media. Earned and paid media should be vigorously pursued for campaign purposes, it was recommended.

Paid advertisements on NFM 98.1 (covering targeted VD's in the Richtersveld, Nama Khoi Khai ma and Kamiesberg local councils) and Radio Kaboesna (covering targeted VD's in the Hantam local council) should run frequently due to cheap rates and the significant local listenership these stations have (refer to Chapter 3, section 3.5.1.1).

Advertisements on community radio should be in Afrikaans and take the form of a narrative of the province-specific message (discussed in section 5.3.2) by either Fred Wyngaard, Provincial Chairperson, or Mosiuoa Lekota, COPE's national President.

Lekota should allocate a minimum of three days to campaign at preset events (mainly rallies if possible) in main centres in the Nama Khoi, Hantam, Khai ma, Kamiesberg and Karoo Hoogland municipalities. Wyngaard should reinforce this by campaigning at preset events in places Lekota is unable to reach. Alerts for all events should be paid for on community radio or broadcast for free as part of news bulletins if necessary.

Regional ad-split options for RSG that would allow COPE to reach voters in all six local councils in Namakwa at a reduced rate must be utilized if campaign resources allow. Advertisements should take the same format as recommended for community radio. Earned media coverage should be driven heavily on community radio to compensate for a potential lack of coverage on RSG, an SABC radio station, due to the damaged image of COPE nationally.

All community newspapers should be used primarily for earned media coverage to save minimal campaign resources for radio advertising. The message of a partnership with the ID should be driven home in these publications as well, possibly through endorsements of COPE by prominent former ID leaders in each locality to create an impression of a swing in support toward COPE.

Flyers carrying the province-specific message should be distributed in the Richtersveld, Nama Khoi, Kamiesberg and Hantam, where former ID voters turned swing voters reside.

These literature drops and handouts should have a specific focus on target VD's. The remainder of the target VD's in the district should receive flyers bearing the national campaign message.

Door-to-door canvassing should be a staple technique in Namakwa, especially in the Khai ma and Karoo Hoogland councils where less opportunities to reach voters with community media are event. Volunteers canvassing target VD's where swing voters reside should be well-versed in the province-specific message.

Visibility is extremely important in target VD's to convey the impression to local voters that COPE is a serious contender, thus reinforcing the province-specific message. T-shirts and party posters should be sent specifically to target VD's in quantities sufficient to at least maintain some parity with the ANC and DA campaign resources likely to be sent to these areas.

In non-targeted VD's, where 16% of the district vote goal is located, the campaign should aspire to achieve visibility only to the extent that the party's presence is noted. This should be complemented by door-to-door canvassing by local activists and politicians along with literature drops using a minimal number of flyers not being distributed in targeted VD's.

#### *5.3.3.2 Pixley ka Seme district*

This arid Karoo district spanning the central portion of the province presents the least options for reaching target voters through commercial or community media. Community print publications, especially, are few and far between. The De Aar Echo can be ignored as it does not carry political news and has too small a circulation to consider for paid media coverage.

*Die Ghaap*, the only other community print publication, should be focused on for earned media coverage in order to reach voters in the Siyancuma, Thembilihle and Siyathemba local councils.

It was recommended that earned media coverage should be pursued in the Volksblad newspaper which circulates in most of the district but is popular mainly amongst white middle-class voters, whereas the campaign is targeting the coloured working class and, to a

lesser extent, black working class in this district. Paid media coverage in this publication was too expensive to consider.

Similarly, community radio was limited to just one station, Ulwazi FM, broadcasting to voters in the Emthanjeni local council. Paid media coverage on this station was too expensive and would reach target voters in just one council out of the reach of COPE for the 2011 election. It was recommended that this station be ignored in terms of paid media coverage but that efforts, nevertheless, be made for earned media coverage.

Umhlobo Wenene, the Xhosa-language SABC radio station broadcasting in the district, was not considered for paid media coverage due a high cost of advertising as the ad-split option was not being available exclusively for this portion of the province. RSG's ad-split option was recommended as an option to reach coloured-working class voters in the eastern portion of the district.

The eastern part of the province is covered by a different ad-split region than the west. This would allow the campaign to run the province-specific message in ads broadcast in Namakwa and Siyanda, falling under the western ad-split option, and the national message in ads broadcast in the Pixley ka Seme and Frances Baard districts, falling under RSG's eastern ad-split option.

The key to really reaching voters in this district would be a strong door-to-door canvassing effort coupled with literature drops and handouts; significant visibility in target VD's through the proliferation of T-shirts and posters; as well as preset events where national and provincial leaders can campaign for the party.

As is the case with Namakwa, it was recommended, campaign material for visibility purposes should be focused primarily in target VD's to convince voters that COPE was a serious contender, and to a lesser extent in the remainder of the VD's where 40% of the vote goal could be found to ensure a presence.

Among target VD's, those in the three councils in the eastern portion of the province, comprising the local councils of Renosterberg, Siyathemba and Thembelihle where COPE had a shot at leading a governing coalition after the 2011 election, should be favoured in the

distribution of campaign material should campaign resources not be sufficient to cover the district in its entirety.

Target VD's comprising the main centres in these three councils should also be where Mosiuoa Lekota should be scheduled to campaign. Due to the eastern portion's proximity to Kimberley, Lekota could be scheduled to campaign in these three councils on the same trip in which he was due to campaign in Kimberley. An estimated three days would be needed for this purpose.

Provincial leaders should campaign at preset events in target VD's comprising the main centres of councils that COPE was not in striking distance of winning. National leaders fluent in Xhosa should be dispatched to campaign at preset events in target VD's where speakers of this language reside, most notably in the Ubuntu, Emthanjani and Umsobomvu councils.

#### *5.3.3.3 Siyanda district*

Target VD's in the western portion of this district comprise the councils that COPE was in striking distance of leading a governing coalition after the 2011 election: Mier, Kai Garieb, Khara Heis and Kheis. In Khara Heis especially, which governs Upington, the second largest centre in the province, there were a number of options for reaching target voters through media.

It was recommended that Radio Riverside, a community media radio station broadcasting to listeners in the Khara Heis local council, be focused for both earned and paid media coverage. The province-specific message should be narrated by Mosiuoa Lekota and run frequently on this station, as was recommended for community radio in Namakwa.

The major commercial radio station in Khara Heis, RSG, run by the SABC, would carry the province-specific message here as well as in Namakwa as the ad-split option covers both of these territories. Voters in the Mier, Kai Garieb and Kheis would also be reached with these ads.

Target voters in councils in the east of the district, Kgatelopele and Tsantsabane, could be reached through paid advertisements running the national campaign message on RSG's eastern ad-split option, it was recommended.

It was recommended that billboards be utilized in the city of Upington to reach voters with the province-specific message. Door-to-door canvassing and literature drops and handouts should be used extensively to reach voters throughout the district. Target VD's should be favoured in terms of the quantities of flyers distributed. The province-specific message should be distributed through flyers in the west of the district and the national message through flyers in the target VD's in the east of the district.

Visibility through posters and T-shirts should be considered essential for target VD's, it was recommended. If campaign resources were not sufficient to cover all target VD's in the district in terms of visibility, then Khara Heis as the biggest prize on offer to COPE in the 2011 election, should be favoured in terms of its target VD's being serviced by the campaign.

Mosiua Lekota should campaign at preset events, preferably rallies that showcase the size of COPE's base support in order to persuade swing voters that the party is viable. It was recommended that this should happen in at least one main centre of each of three councils, all within a reasonable distance of each other: Khara Heis, Kheis and Kai Garieb.

Mier, as a council that could be won, was excluded due to the distances needing to be travelled to get Lekota to the northern-most tip of the country. An estimated three days would be needed for Lekota to campaign in these councils. Provincial leaders should cover the remaining main centres falling within target VD's in the district.

#### *5.3.3.4 Frances Baard district*

The Sol Plaatje local council, which governs Kimberley, the province's largest centre, was the only council in the Frances Baard district for which objectives were set. The DFA and Volksblad, the two major local news oriented commercial newspapers, are popular. The DFA in particular has a 50% black and coloured working class readership.

It was recommended that both newspapers be vigorously targeted for earned media coverage as well the Northern Cape Express, a free Media24 community newspaper. As discussed, the Volksblad is too expensive to advertise in and is not popular amongst working

class target voters. The DFA, however, has more reasonably priced advertising rates and should be considered for paid media coverage.

Community radio in this council, in the form of Teemaneng, should be ignored due to its high advertising rates and the immense competition the station faces from other commercial radio stations like MetroFM, 5FM and the various SABC-run stations, it was recommended.

Visibility is both important and expensive to achieve in this, the province's largest city. Billboards available to rent in the city should be utilized for paid media coverage to convey the national campaign message. Flyers bearing the same message should be distributed through literature drops and handouts. This should be complemented by an extensive door-to-door canvassing effort.

Given that all of COPE's provincial leaders were based in city, a rigorous schedule of preset events should afford campaign opportunities for them when their scheduled visits to other districts allow. Mosioua Lekota should campaign in the city as should other national leaders of the party.

#### **5.4 SUMMARY**

To achieve the campaign objectives COPE would need to rely on the community-based branches the party had been able to build in an environment of relative political stability compared to the chaotic internal politics in other provinces. The 2009 election results in the Northern Cape had, fortunately, also left the party with a province-wide base vote, in varying degrees of significance, and support across races in many instances to build on in the 2011 election.

Primarily due to the history of many politicians and activists' history in the ANC, COPE also had a set of local, provincial and national leaders with established profiles and leadership credentials that could be promoted. Many positive aspects inherited from the campaigning culture of the ANC, such as signing at rallies and the ability of many to make rousing speeches, were also strengths that the party could rely on in the 2011 elections.

COPE also had two major, possibly fundamental, weaknesses to contend with. A damaged image nationally had been incurred after nearly two years of factional conflict between the party's President, Mosiuoa Lekota, and Deputy President, Mbhazima Shilowa. In many reports, the dominant image of COPE was one of a party in collapse.

Expensive court cases, jilted donors and no discernible fundraising strategy at a national level also meant that COPE would contest the 2011 election, nationally at least, with little to no campaign resources to convince the public that it was a viable competitor.

In the Northern Cape, however, the party could alleviate the problem of minimal campaign resources by adhering to a targeting strategy focusing on councils where real prospects for electoral success existed. Former ID voters, disillusioned ANC voters and white DA voters in select localities could also be wooed with the right campaign messaging due to COPE's significant support base and electoral prospects in select councils in the west of the province.

A cooperative provincial media, in contrast to the situation elsewhere, could be exploited in terms of earned media coverage. A significant province-wide commercial farming network could be canvassed for campaign donations and assistance to access voters living on private land.

In 2011 would need to contest against a well-funded ANC that had no qualms about using its incumbency in provincial and local government to abuse state resources for campaigning and patronage purposes. The DA would also potentially use ID leader, Patricia De Lille, to campaign alongside Helen Zille in key parts of the province in a bid to consolidate the ID vote under the DA banner.

In selected wards in the province where the VD analysis showed prospects for a COPE win, the opposition vote could be split due to votes being cast for both COPE and the DA regardless of the fact that COPE had the real chance of winning the ward. In some cases, losing specific wards could affect the opposition's prospects of a governing coalition in select councils after the 2011 election.

COPE would contest the 2011 election in the face of an, at times, hostile, at times indifferent, national media due to the well-publicized factional conflict within the party. This would make it difficult for the party to convey its campaign message nationally. The lack of an effective campaign organization at a national level would also affect the quality of support the party in the Northern Cape would get during the election.

The recommendations for a communication strategy for COPE's 2011 Municipal Elections campaign in the Northern Cape covered three main aspects: targeting, messaging and techniques.

As part of the targeting strategy, 84% of the total vote goal for the Namakwa district was located in just 31 target VD's out of a district total of 101 VD's. VD's with high numbers of swing voters, primarily due to significant past support for the ID in this district, were targeted in the setting of vote goals. VD's comprising main centres in each council were also preferred over sparsely-populated rural VD's to spare the campaign the prospect of expensive forays into the countryside.

Due to the dispersion of the Namakwa population into small but significant populations of voters, VD's requiring a vote goal of 100 votes or more were considered as targets in contrast to other districts where 200 votes or more was considered a threshold to label a VD as targeted.

In the Pixley ka Seme district, 60% of the total vote in the district is concentrated in just 25 target VD's. The other 40% was dispersed in numbers of less than 200 per VD vote goal in the remaining 142 VD's in the district.

The highest vote goals for target VD's were set in the eastern portion of the district, particularly in councils where COPE stood a chance of leading a governing coalition after the election. Isolated wards where the party could be successful in unwinnable councils also had target VD's with ambitious vote goals.

In the Siyanda district, 74% of the total vote goal for the district was concentrated in just 27 target VD's. The remaining 26% was dispersed amongst the other 100 VD's in numbers of less than 200 per VD vote goal set. VD's in councils comprising the western portion of the

district that were characterized by high numbers of swing voters, due mainly to significant past support for the ID, were targeted in the setting of vote goals.

Vote goals in VD's in the Khara Heis local council, which governs the second largest provincial centre of Upington, were set particularly ambitiously due to the prospects of COPE leading a governing coalition in the council after the 2011 election and the need to win over swing voters in order to achieve this.

In the Frances Baard district, 67% of the total vote goal for the district is located in just 25 target VD's. All 25 of these VD's were located in the Sol Plaatje local council, which governs the largest provincial centre of Kimberley.

No objectives, goals or target VD's were set in the rest of the district due to minimal prospects for COPE and the need to expend campaign resources elsewhere in the province. No local councils were recommended for COPE to contest in the John Taole Gaetsewe district for the same reason.

The purpose of recommendations regarding messaging was to develop any complementary provincial campaign messages, if necessary, based on information gained from the Situation, VD and SWOT analyses.

The VD analysis revealed large numbers of swing voters in local councils where COPE was within striking distance leading a governing coalition after the 2011 election, based on the party's 2009 results. These local councils were: Richtersveld, Nama Khoi, Kamiesberg, Hantam, Mier, Kai Garieb, Khara Heis and Kheis.

The analysis of past election results as part of the Situation Analysis revealed that the significant numbers of swing voters in these councils were primarily former ID supporters who had been voting for opposition parties since 1994 in an overwhelming rejection of the ANC.

As discussed in the SWOT analysis, the DA had chosen not to include ID colours or symbols in its campaign material. The party was also not acknowledged in DA campaign messaging. The following message was developed to woo these voters:

*“Another five years of the ANC in charge is a lifetime too long. Only if COPE and ID supporters stand together in this election will it be possible to remove the ANC from power in this council. By voting COPE we can govern together to the benefit of the community.”*

This message, it was recommended, would acknowledge the importance of these voters, make the case for why they needed to vote COPE, and remind them that the ANC had to be removed from power now in order to improve the delivery of services to communities. In this way, the message complemented the national campaign slogans COPE had chosen to use: “the time for change is now” and “your partner for real change”.

Techniques were recommended for reaching voters in each district, with a particular focus on reaching target voters with COPE’s campaign messages. Voters in Namakwa district should be reached through paid advertisements on community and commercial radio; earned media coverage in community newspapers and on community radio; and door-to-door canvassing coupled with literature drops and handouts. Visibility should be prioritized for target VD’s through posters and T-shirts.

Flyers and radio advertisements should carry the provincial campaign message for target VD’s with high numbers of swing voters. Endorsements from local ID leaders should be considered for all media platforms. COPE President Mosiuoa Lekota should campaign in at least one main centre per local council with the exception of the Richtersveld, it was recommended.

While limited options for earned media coverage in commercial and community newspapers existed in the Pixley ka Seme district, as well as paid advertisements on community radio, the primary way of reaching these voters would be through door-to-door canvassing, including literature drops and handouts, as well as preset events. Visibility should be prioritized for target VD’s through posters and T-shirts.

Provincial and national leaders should campaign in target VD’s in this district, with a particular focus on councils in the eastern portion of the district where COPE could win, it was recommended. The national campaign message should be used throughout the district.

In the Siyanda district, paid advertisements on community and commercial radio as well as door-to-door canvassing, literature drops and handouts, as well as preset events should be used to reach voters, it was recommended.

Billboards should be used for paid media coverage in Upington and visibility should be prioritized for target VD's through posters and T-shirts. Target VD's in the western portion of the district where former ID supporters reside should receive the provincial campaign message via all recommended platforms. Lekota should also prioritize these areas for campaigning at preset events, it was recommended.

For the Sol Plaatje local council in the Frances Baard district, it was recommended that voters be reached through earned media coverage in commercial and community newspapers; paid billboard advertisements; visibility in the form of posters and T-shirts; as well as door-to-door canvassing, literature drops and handouts.

All provincial leaders and as many national leaders as possible, including Lekota, should campaign in the city of Kimberley with a special focus on target VD's. The national campaign message should be used in all campaigning, it was recommended.

## CHAPTER 6: EVALUATION OF THE CAMPAIGN AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter starts off with a brief recap of the study followed by an evaluation of COPE's communication strategy for the 2011 Municipal Elections in the Northern Cape.

The campaign objectives, in terms of the seats the party sought to win in each municipal council, are compared to the actual election results through a table, narrative and critique of the implementation of the recommended targeting strategy.

Finally, suggestions are offered on what a successful communication strategy would need to address for political parties in general in the Northern Cape for future elections in the province.

### 6.2 A RECAP

This study comprised a literature review of sources relating to political and electoral campaign theory; a situation analysis of political dynamics in the Northern Cape as they relate to the 2011 municipal elections; the setting of objectives for COPE's 2011 campaign in the Northern Cape; a SWOT analysis and recommendations for a communication strategy for the party's campaign; and an evaluation of the outcome of the 2011 elections in the province and the implementation of this study's recommendations.

In this section the main findings relating to the situation analysis and SWOT analysis are discussed along with a brief synopsis of the 2011 election results and the political situation in terms of how party support may evolve going forward. The recommendations of the study are then summarized in terms of the objectives set for the campaign and the subsequent communication strategy that followed from this, as well as a brief outline of

how the recommendations of the study were implemented in practice by COPE in the 2011 campaign.

Finally, conclusions are drawn on what major factors should be considered by opposition political parties in general in order to be successful in future campaigns in the Northern Cape. Suggestions for further research on the topic of political and electoral campaigning in the Northern Cape are also given.

Support in the province is consolidated around three parties. Collectively, the DA, ANC and COPE account for 97% of the vote (94% in 2009). The province has a coloured and white majority (44% and 10% respectively according to Bureau for Market Research projections). At the time of writing in 2011, the white electorate were DA base voters, the black electorate ANC base voters, and the coloured electorate split among the three parties.

Kimberley and Upington, as the two largest centres, are crucial to the success of any campaign due to the significant concentration of the provincial population in these two cities. Galeshewe in Kimberley, the largest and oldest township in the province accounts for a very significant portion of the total provincial electorate.

Patronage and poverty are major issues. Unemployment on the wide definition is 35.8% (although likely to be far higher) and 52% of households earn their income primarily from social grants (refer to Chapter 3, section 3.3.3).

COPE entered the election with a severely damaged image due to the destructive leadership battle between Mbhazima Shilowa and Mosiuoa Lekota – effectively waged since the inception of the party, two years prior to the 2011 election. The party also entered 2011 with very little campaign organizational capacity, especially at a national level, as well as insufficient policy clarity (refer to chapter 5, section 5.2.2).

Nevertheless, the party in the Northern Cape had been saved by the destructive factionalism plaguing structures in other parts of the country, due to an overwhelming consensus on support for Lekota as well as a credible provincial leadership. Strength at a local level was evident in many parts of the province and its overall support was enough to

become the official opposition in the Northern Cape Legislature in 2009 (refer to chapter 3, section 3.6.2).

COPE was due to face two formidable opponents, however, in the 2011 election – the ANC and DA. The ANC enjoys mass support in the province and is aided by a considerable campaign organization and financial backing, with the added affinity for using its position as an incumbent in provincial and local government to campaign for the party under the guise of state programmes during election periods (refer to chapter 5, section 5.2.4).

The DA entered the election with a concluded agreement to merge with the ID, a party with significant pockets of support in councils where the balance of support was precarious enough to potentially result in a coalition opposition victory. The party also appears to enjoy decent financial backing and a strong campaign organization (refer to Chapter 3, section 3.4.2).

In 2011, the 22% support won by the DA (12% in 2009) was, in all probability, a result of the consolidation of the ID vote (5% in 2009); a good get-out-the-vote strategy; the death of the ACDP and FF+ (1% each in 2009); and the winning of minimal support from COPE and the ANC (1 – 2% from each is an educated guess).

The ANC was likely the big beneficiary (60% to 63% between 2009 and 2011) of the decline of COPE (the party went from 17% to 12% over the two elections the party has fought). Opposition support has failed to reach 1994 levels - 45%. There appears to be a stubborn ANC electorate that has kept opposition performance around the 30 – 35% mark for all elections since, with the party entities holding the support changing with each successive election (refer to chapter 3, section 3.6.1).

Should the opposition have ambitions of winning the province in 2014, the maintenance and probably growth of COPE's 12% would be important, if only to keep votes from streaming back to the ANC. The DA would have to grow by around 8% and COPE by 5% or so to win an election in 2014, which would require some sort of cooperation.

Should the DA take a longer-term view of matters, it could probably take the province in 2019 or 2024 without assistance from any other parties due to the likely attrition of COPE's

support. In the absence of significant changes to the latter's election machinery, a 2014 result of about 6% or slightly less is likely.

A party with reasonable financial backing behind localized campaigns that can talk jobs convincingly, while fending off significant use of state resources to fight elections by the ANC, is likely to be successful.

Objectives and municipal vote goals that would enable COPE to lead a governing coalition in 12 local councils were set as a result of the VD analysis showing the party to be within striking distance of realistically achieving this. The councils were: Nama Khoi, Kamiesberg, Hantam, Karoo Hoogland, Khai ma, Mier, Kai Garieb, Khara Heis, Kheis, Renosterberg, Thembelihle and Siyathemba (refer to chapter 4, section 4.2).

There were also prospects for COPE to lead a governing coalition in the Namakwa districts and an outside chance of this occurring in the Siyanda and Pixley ka Seme districts. The party would need to adhere to the recommended targeting strategy by focusing its campaign resources primarily in target VD's in order to achieve this.

COPE would contest the election in the Northern Cape with limited resources relative to the other two viable competitors, the DA and ANC. It was recommended that these resources be directed to localities where the party would be able to make a significant impact.

As a result, objectives, vote goals and target VD's were not allocated to three of the four local councils in the Frances Baard district and all three local councils in the John Taole Gaetsewe district. It was recommended that COPE refrain from contesting these areas due to VD analysis data indicating low base votes, low swing potential and high numbers of ANC base votes relative to the rest of the province.

In the Namakwa district, 84% of the total vote goal was located in just 31 target VD's out of a district total of 101 VD's. In the Pixley ka Seme district, 60% of the total vote in the district is concentrated in just 25 target VD's. In the Siyanda district, 74% of the total vote goal for the district was concentrated in just 27 target VD's.

In the Frances Baard district, 67% of the total vote goal for the district is located in just 25 target VD's. All 25 of these VD's were located in the Sol Plaatje local council, which governs the largest provincial centre of Kimberley (refer to chapter 5, section 5.3.1.4).

It was recommended that swing voters in 8 local councils that showed significant past support for the ID, should be reached with a tailored provincial campaign message that complemented COPE national campaign message:

*"Another five years of the ANC in charge is a lifetime too long. Only if COPE and ID supporters stand together in this election will it be possible to remove the ANC from power in this council. By voting COPE we can govern together to the benefit of the community."*

This message, it was recommended, would focus on ID voters, most of whom the analysis of past election results had revealed to have been voting for the opposition since 1994, by compelling them to vote COPE as the opposition party with the most support and best chance of defeating the ANC based on the 2009 election results in these local councils.

The message purposefully acknowledged these voters and their value in contrast to the DA who, in the wake of the party's merger with the ID, had chosen not include any of the party's symbols or colours in its campaign material, or refer to these voters directly in its campaign messaging (refer to chapter 5, section 5.2.3).

Techniques for reaching voters, and target voters in particular, in each district were recommended. Door-to-door canvassing coupled with literature drops and handouts as well as preset events were recommended techniques for all districts. The provincial campaign message was to be communicated to swing voters in target VD's in eight local councils and the national message to voters in the remainder of the province.

COPE President Mosiuoa Lekota was to campaign at preset events in at least one main centre of 11 of the 12 local councils where COPE was set winning campaign objectives, as well as in the Sol Plaatje local council. Provincial and national leaders were to campaign in the remainder of the localities with a specific focus on target VD's.

The campaign was to focus on achieving visibility through posters and T-shirts specifically in target VD's in a manner that it enabled COPE to at least match its competitors in this regard.

Minimal amounts of this campaign material were to be directed to non-targeted VD's to enable the campaign to focus on appearing as a viable competitor where it counted.

It was recommended that paid media coverage be pursued on billboards in Kimberley and Upington, commercial radio in the form of RSG, community radio in the form of NFM 98.1 in the Namakwa district and Radio Riverside in the Khara Heis local council, as well as in the DFA, a commercial newspaper in the Sol Plaatje local council.

Earned media coverage was to be sought in all community and commercial media in the Namakwa, Pixley ka Seme, Siyanda and Frances Baard districts in cases where a policy of carrying political news was in place (refer to chapter 5, section 5.3.3).

### **6.3 THE 2011 ELECTION RESULTS VS CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES**

The overall outcome of the election reinforces the trend of support in the province being consolidated around three parties. Collectively, the DA, ANC and COPE accounted for 97% of the vote in the 2011 election (94% in 2009).

The 22% support won by the DA (12% in 2009) was, in all probability, a result of the consolidation of the ID vote (5% in 2009); a good get-out-the-vote strategy; the disappearance of support for parties that, historically, relied on white base voters, the African Christian Democratic Party and Freedom Front Plus (1% each in 2009); and the winning of minimal support from COPE and the ANC (1 – 2% from each in all likelihood).

The ANC was likely the big beneficiary (60% to 63% of the total provincial vote for the 2009 and 2011 elections respectively) of the decline of COPE (the party's proportion of the provincial vote dropped from 17% to 12% over the same two elections).

In 2011, some councils were, nevertheless, won by the opposition as a result of coalitions between COPE and the DA, albeit far less than what appeared to be possible prior to the election. In Nama Khoi and Hantam the DA leads a coalition government with COPE, while in Karoo Hoogland, COPE leads a coalition with the DA. All three councils are in the Namakwa

district. Below is a table comparing the objectives set for COPE per municipal council with the actual result for the party in each.

<b>Council</b>	<b>Objectives*</b>	<b>2011 Election Result</b>
Namakwa district	6	1
Richtersveld	2	0
Nama Khoi	5	3
Kamiesberg	3	1
Hantam	2	1
Karoo Hoogland	3	2
Khai ma	3	2
Pixley ka Seme district	7	2
Ubuntu	2	1
Umsobomvu	3	1
Emthanjeni	3	1
Kareeberg	2	1
Renosterberg	3	2
Thembelihle	3	2
Siyathemba	4	2
Siyancuma	4	2
Siyanda district	7	2
Mier	3	1
Kai Garieb	5	3
Khara Heis	8	4
Kheis	3	2

Tsantsabane	3	1
Kgatelopele	3	1
Frances Baard district	3	1
Sol Plaatje	12	5
Dikgatlong	3	1
Magareng	0	1
Phokwane	0	1
John Taole Gaetsewe district	0	1
Ga Segonyana	0	1
Moshaweng	0	3
Gamagara	0	1

\*If an objective is indicated as "0" then this was a council that COPE was not recommended to contest based on the objectives calculations (refer to Chapter 4, section 4.2) and targeting strategy (refer to Chapter 5, section 5.3).

From the above table it is clear that COPE failed to achieve its campaign objectives in all local and district councils the party contested. The party also chose to ignore the campaign objectives and targeting strategy recommended by this study, instead taking the decision to contest all councils and a total of 189 out of 194 wards in the province (it was recommended that the party contest 147 out of 194 wards in order to enable it to focus its limited resources in target VD's).

The significant disparity between the objective for seats on the Namakwa district council and the actual result (six and one respectively) reflects the inability of the party to win sufficient representation in the four local councils where it had the potential to lead a governing coalition. This resulted in the failure to garner four seats on the district for district representatives from each of these councils, namely: Nama Khoi, Kamiesberg, Khai ma and Karoo Hoogland.

While COPE achieved the mayoral position in Karoo Hoogland, the district representative seat was negotiated away to the DA because COPE had not won an outright majority in the council that would have allowed the party to take both positions (Julies, 2011).

Similarly, the disparity between the objective for seats on the Pixley ka Seme district council and the actual result (seven and two respectively) is a consequence of the party's failure to meet vote goals in councils where winning objectives were set in the eastern portion of the district, namely: Renosterberg, Thembilihle and Siyathemba. A significant drop in support in the Emthanjeni local council also cost the party a district representative seat for that council.

The narrative is the same for the Siyanda district (an objective of seven versus an outcome of two seats) where the party failed to meet vote goals in councils where winning objectives were set in the western portion of the district, namely: Mier, Kai Garieb, Khara Heis and Kheis.

In the Frances Baard district, COPE lost a large chunk of support in the Sol Plaatje local council - just five seats were achieved against an objective of 12 (the party would have achieved nine hypothetical seats in the 2009 election).

As mentioned in this section, councils were contested by COPE contrary to the recommendations of the study. Three of these were in the Frances Baard district (Dikgatlong, Magareng and Phokwane) and the three in the John Taole Gaetsewe district (Moshaweng, Ga Segonyana and Gamagara). The party was able to manage a total of seven seats from these five councils as well as a seat on the John Taole Gaetsewe district council.

In the section to follow, the main factors influencing the outcome of the election for COPE as opposed to the objectives set for the party will be discussed individually.

#### **6.4 MAIN FACTORS INFLUENCING THE OUTCOME**

There appeared to be eight major factors that were common to all localities in the province in influencing the outcome of COPE's provincial campaign. While many emanated from within the system of the campaign organization itself, some factors were beyond the control of the party at a provincial level, emanating from the external environment within which the campaign system operated.

#### **6.4.1 Non-adherence to targeting strategy**

The reasoning behind the recommendation for COPE to abstain from contesting in selected councils was that the party would likely have contested the election with very limited resources. Spreading campaign material in the form of posters, T-shirts, flyers and the like, too thin across the entire province would result in smaller quantities being available in targeted territories where it counts, with the natural consequence of a lesser impact on voters.

The decision by the party to put added pressure on its finances by contesting an additional 42 wards in areas where it stood little chance of making inroads, in all probability partially explains the reason why objectives were not achieved in seemingly winnable councils where voters needed to see and feel the presence of the COPE through campaign material.

Ultimately, the party funded the campaign entirely on provincial finances (Van Niekerk, 2011). Unlike its viable competitors, the ANC and DA, COPE received almost no financial assistance from its national structure and should have taken more care to concentrate its resources in targeted areas more effectively.

#### **6.4.2 Lack of national media coverage**

The SABC all but ignored the participation of COPE in the 2011 elections. Unfortunately for the provincial campaign, the source of this problem lay between the party's national campaign organization and the public broadcaster. COPE appeared on just two of the Sunday night election debates scheduled during the course of the months preceding the election (Dexter, 2011b). This could have occurred either through the bias of the SABC or the incompetence of the party's national campaign organization.

An official complaint was also laid against the SABC by the party for allegedly disadvantaging it in terms of coverage in evening news bulletins of the election. Aspects of the complaint included the scheduling of COPE coverage for earlier bulletins and then its removal from the news agenda for the more popular evening news; the length of time allocated to the party in bulletins in comparison to smaller less viable parties such as AZAPO and the ACDP; and the alleged failure of the SABC to attend key COPE campaign events despite prior notice being given by the party (Killian, 2011).

Besides the lack of earned media coverage on the radio and television platforms of the public broadcaster, paid media coverage was severely lacking in comparison to the ANC and DA who ran extensive campaigns on both platforms.

No advertising campaigns were run by COPE on television, in national print media or on any national radio station (Dexter, 2011b). Given that most of the Northern Cape population relies on SABC news or radio for news and entertainment, the provincial campaign understandably suffered from the lack of coverage in comparison to its viable competitors.

Despite the party sticking broadly by the recommendations of the communication strategy for earned and paid media coverage in targeted areas, the absence of coverage on SABC platforms negatively affected the campaign's ability to get its message across to voters and, subsequently, to appear as a viable option to vote for.

#### **6.4.3 Poor distribution of campaign resources**

Closely linked to the spreading of campaign resources too thinly by contesting in non-targeted areas, the distribution and procurement systems in place to ensure that campaign material arrived in each locality on time and in the right quantity were severely lacking.

Procurement of all T-shirts, flyers, backing boards and posters was done locally in Kimberley or delivered to the city before being distributed to the rest of the province. Immense distances therefore needed to be covered in order for the campaign material to arrive in the Namakwa district and western portions of the Pixley ka Seme and Siyanda districts.

Transport systems were lacking in that local leaders from the various municipalities were either expected to arrange transport of the goods from Kimberley to their area without a subsidy for this expense from the party.

Leaders from a specific council would be entrusted with transporting campaign material for not only themselves but also for neighbouring councils as well, resulting in instances where material never arrived in certain localities due to it being used elsewhere. Storage of the material was also problematic as backing boards were kept at the Frances Baard COPE regional headquarters, due to the office space being the only sizeable place available to the party in the vicinity.

In an environment of limited resources where very specific numbers of campaign material were prescribed for each council, this distribution method proved to be unsuccessful. Backing boards often never reached the furthest localities due to the inability of local leaders to arrange suitable transport to bear the heavy mass of the boards.

Local politicians transporting material for neighbouring councils often used it all for their own localities instead, likely due to the fear that this would be the last material they see for the rest of the campaign.

Storing important material in an office essentially geared to manage regional interests also resulted in regional leaders looking after the interests of councils under their watch at the expense of councils elsewhere, whose representatives were struggling to get to Kimberley.

The end result was that, due to the proximity to Kimberley, councils in the predominantly non-targeted east of the province were able to covet most of the campaign material at the

expense of the predominantly targeted western councils, ultimately causing campaigns in those localities to suffer. In practice, this constituted an almost exact reversal of the recommended targeting strategy.

#### **6.4.4 State resources and patronage**

As predicted in the SWOT analysis (refer to Chapter 5, section 5.2.4), the ANC supplemented its already well-funded campaign by using government departments to disguise campaign activities as state-funded service delivery programmes.

Besides the R10 million allocated by the Premier and provincial treasury to be shared among councils where the ANC exhibited a 2009 performance of 55% of the vote or less (Wyngaard, 2011b), there are also examples of the probable abuse of state resources during the 2011 campaign.

For a period of two weeks stretching from late April to early May 2011, as the election neared in mid-May, the Department of Social Development deployed a large delegation of officials alongside ANC politicians to Karoo Hoogland municipality for what was termed a “winter-relief programme”. The premise, as explained by the Department, was to provide “poverty relief” in one of the coldest parts of the Northern Cape during winter (Cloete, 2011). The council also happened to exhibit the lowest percentage of ANC support in 2009 – 33%.

Blankets, scarves, food parcels and the like were distributed en masse to residents of Williston, Fraserburg and Sutherland as ANC politicians reportedly extolled the virtues of the party alongside government officials (Julies, 2011).

The provincial government was also able to use the public holidays of Freedom Day (27 April 2011) and Workers Day (1 May 2011) to hold state-sponsored rallies in the key towns of Springbok (Nama Khoi council) and De Aar (Emthanjeni council) respectively.

These examples and the many others reported by local activists suggests that the ANC campaign benefitted significantly from state funds to the detriment of the campaigns of its viable opponents, COPE and the DA.

#### **6.4.5 Insufficient visibility in target VD's**

Due to the poor distribution systems and the spreading of resources too thinly by contesting in non-targeted areas that characterized the COPE campaign, the ANC and DA were able to capitalize by running far more visible campaigns by comparison in targeted localities.

By 19 March 2011, the DA had managed to line the streets of every locality in the country with significant numbers of election posters (Zille, 2011). Due to high-quality printing, the posters did not fade at all through sun and rain, easily maintaining their brightness and colour into Election Day. Albeit slightly later and with a lesser quality poster that was prone to colour fading, the ANC was able to accomplish the same (Letsoalo, 2011).

Both of COPE's viable opponents were also able to ensure significant numbers of T-shirts bearing party logos and slogans reached localities that COPE should have been focusing its resources in according to the recommendations of this study. The effect was that COPE's message of being the more viable option for former ID voters to choose based on 2009 electoral strength, was not reflected in what was visibly apparent to voters in each locality.

#### **6.4.6 COPE's poor campaign organization**

COPE's campaign in the Northern Cape also suffered from a significant lack of support and disorganization within the party's national campaign organization. In contrast to the "war-rooms" of the ANC and DA (Boyle, 2011) from which campaigns were coordinated at a

national level, COPE barely had a national campaign organization to speak of (Khalipa, 2011).

The effects of a disjointed approach by its national structure were keenly felt by COPE in the province. A clear deployment schedule for national leaders, including the party's president Mosiuoa Lekota, to campaign in the province was non-existent. Lekota turned out to be the only national politician to campaign in a province where many councils appeared to be winnable based on past performance.

While Lekota was able to make campaign stops in many of the targeted councils, the uncertainty of when he would arrive and how many days he would stay in the province negatively affected the ability of local leaders to confidently mobilize voters to attend rallies without the absolute surety of a reliable schedule from the national structure.

As mentioned, little to no material assistance was provided by COPE national to the provincial campaign in contrast to the ANC and DA, who relied heavily on campaign finance and resources from their national structures.

Due to the lack of coherency in the national campaign organization, there also appeared to be no sustainable strategy for generating positive media coverage of the campaign from a national level.

The momentum of the party's 2009 election campaign, where it managed to hog 34% of SABC coverage (Media Monitoring Africa, 2009), was clearly not evident in 2011 and the statistics will in all probability reflect this once they have been generated. While it can be argued that factional battles within the party had contributed to a hostile media environment, very little was done by the party in terms of pro-actively mitigating this during the 2011 campaign.

#### **6.4.7 The Mompoti deflection**

An unfortunate setback for COPE was the defection of Neville Mompoti, its leader in the provincial legislature and one of its most high-profile politicians, to the ANC in late April (Kwon Hoo, 2011).

Besides the dismay this would have caused amongst grassroots politicians of the party, the defection was in all probability keenly felt in terms of party support in Galeshewe, Kimberley, where Mompoti remains popular (Kies, 2010a). COPE achieved just five seats on the Sol Plaatje local council in 2011 compared to the nine hypothetical seats it would have won in 2009 (refer to chapter 4, section 4.2.4.1).

Given the timing of just over two weeks before the election, it appears that Mompoti collaborated with the ANC to ensure that his defection would have the maximum detrimental impact possible on the COPE campaign. Mompoti in all likelihood conveyed confidential information to the ANC about COPE's campaign strategy, including the recommendations of this study to which he was privy.

It is also speculated that the party's failure to accumulate savings for election purposes from the state-funding it had been receiving since 2009 as part of its representation in the legislature, was a deliberate tactic used to undermine the 2011 campaign on the part of Mompoti as the then leader of the party in the legislature and accounting officer of its finances (Wyngaard, 2011c).

Within days of his defection, Mompoti hit the campaign trail on behalf of the ANC – holding rallies in specifically in targeted municipalities where the ANC was under threat of losing control. Rallies were held in Keimoes in the Kai Garieb council, Fraserburg in the Karoo Hoogland council as well as extensive radio appearances on Nfm, the community radio station broadcasting to most of Namakwa district (Julies, 2011; Maphanka, 2011; Newman, 2011b).

Local leaders reported that Mompoti's message was specifically tailored to discourage voters from supporting COPE, along the lines of his initial pronouncements made when his defection was announced at an ANC press briefing at Luthuli House (Mammburu, 2011).

#### **6.4.8 Insufficient training**

Besides the lack of political buy-in on a provincial level for the targeting strategy recommended by this study, insufficient training was provided to regional and local structures on how the targeting strategy would affect the approach to the individual local campaigns.

In total, five training sessions, one per district, were held in March and a manual was produced by the party to explain how campaigns should be conducted on a local level. Given the vastness of the province, however, even a session in each district is insufficient to reach grassroots activists in far-flung localities.

A targeting strategy has significant implications for scheduling, resource allocation to voting districts and wards, and many other campaign activities in each locality. If the strategy is not sufficiently familiar to local campaign organizations then the tactics employed by them are not likely to reflect the strategy.

Having discussed the main factors influencing the outcome of the campaign, a summary will now be presented of the findings and recommendations of the study as a whole along with conclusions on what political parties would need to do in future campaigns in the province in order to be successful.

### **6.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE ELECTION CAMPAIGNING**

This section will focus on the aspects of a communication strategy for future election campaigns in the Northern Cape that parties in general would, in all probability, need to employ in order to meet objectives, if not win an election outright. The conclusions to follow draw on the research conducted as part of this study as well as the personal experience of playing an active part in election campaigns of the Northern Cape.

### **6.5.1 National attention and two-way cooperation**

Press releases from the national structures of opposition parties should speak more to and about the province. Momentum can quickly be gained as the population is generally ignored in national media and therefore not used to attention. Provincial issues that are sufficiently newsworthy should also be elevated more to a national level through the party communication infrastructure.

Currently news about the Northern Cape is virtually nil in the national arena and the opposition should seize the opportunity to remedy this. Practically, legislature staff should maintain contact with provincial communication officials to feed them news and national members of parliament should talk more about the Northern Cape.

Communication managers at all levels should also monitor the flow of provincial news in order to provide guidance on where particular issues can be exploited for the benefit of the a party's earned media coverage.

### **6.5.2 Exploiting the provincial farming network**

The Northern Cape cannot be won without an excellent understanding of the provincial farming network. Of the province's vast total geographical area, 95% of land is privately owned (Nkwinti, 2011). Understanding of this crucial network should extend down to the level of who owns what farm and where; what issues concern them; and what assistance they can provide to opposition campaigns in their locality.

Besides monetary and other assistance there are two further important aspects to this network. Farmworkers are often migrants and the party's campaigns would benefit from knowledge of the movements of the electorate, where and when.

Secondly, it is likely that much of the electorate remains unreached by most parties during elections due to the low density of populated areas and lack of access to expansive farms in the platteland wilderness. Farmworkers, quite often, do not have ID books which excludes them from voting (Mchlauli, 2010).

The province is vast and sparsely populated. The type of resources required to properly reach small, but important, pockets of voters in an election should not be under-estimated.

### **6.5.3 Credible leadership faces**

A credible black face for the opposition is likely to be one of the only means of winning over the ANC-aligned black electorate. The most credible black opposition face at this point appears to be Pakes Dikgetsi, who is a COPE MPL and former MEC for Finance – a person with a credible political history and well-known and liked across all constituencies (Dikgetsi, 2011).

An option for the DA, should the party decide to look beyond its provincial leadership, would be Patricia De Lille - which would strike fear into the hearts of all the DA's competitors due to the past strength of the ID and her likely appeal to the coloured voting majority. There is significant risk involved in this, however, because the province is hardly a sure thing for the opposition in 2014 and the likely upsurge in support would need to be weighed against the resilience of the De Lille brand should it suffer the loss of an election.

### **6.5.4 Good targeting strategies and opposition cooperation**

Given the varying trends in terms of party support on a geographical basis in the Northern Cape, future campaigns must have good targeting strategies in order to be successful. The province is vast and expensive to campaign in. Opposition parties in particular, may have fewer resources to employ in order to fight elections.

Focusing campaign resources in target VD's where more impact is likely to be made will aid campaigns in being successful. In order to avoid the splitting of votes in certain localities in future local elections, the two remaining viable opposition parties, COPE and the DA, should consider a cooperation arrangement or, perhaps, a total merger of the two parties.

Both the DA and COPE would need to increase their proportions of the vote significantly in future provincial elections to stand a chance of governing the province. Given the balance of voter support for each of the parties at the time of writing, neither would be able to become the party of government without a coalition.

The possible declining fortunes of COPE given the state of the party's organization and image nationally, may necessitate some assistance from the more established DA in order to grow COPE support against the odds. This may need to come in the form of organizational or financial support based on a sound cooperation agreement.

#### **6.5.5 Strong campaign organizations in Kimberley and Upington**

Given the size of the electorates, a party that does well in these two cities is likely to be in with a shot at winning the province. Structures that are formidable at the politics of door-to-door work are essential. Get-out-the-vote machinery needs to be superb. In provincial elections, the ANC is likely to campaign heavily in Galeshewe where significant numbers of its base voters, and the total provincial electorate, reside.

The ANC likes to demonstrate strength, especially in Galeshewe, by bussing people in for massive stadium rallies with big-name speakers. The party has also neglected other parts of the province in order to flood delivery into Galeshewe. Since 1994, the township has transformed significantly from a collection of dusty streets to tarred roads, a court, prison, legislature and other monuments to development (Wyngaard, 2011a).

While delivery is still poor in many parts, the transformation of the place should not be under-estimated. It is also home to most of the unionized (and thus ANC-affiliated) provincial civil service as most provincial head offices of government departments are based in the city (Kies, 2010a).

While perhaps not on the scale of the ANC's tactics, signs of strength for the opposition in these areas need to be demonstrated in order to build momentum. Upington is a great second prize, though, with reasonably high levels of opposition support and a less politically loyal coloured-dominated electorate.

#### **6.5.6 Earned and paid media coverage**

Besides the need for targeted communication as mentioned earlier, a more detailed approach for regional media in each district is provided below:

*Frances Baard* – Performance in the main regional newspapers the DFA, Volksblad and Motsosa Kgang is crucial to this district. The DFA and Volksblad allow an almost 100% success rate in getting decent press releases published. The opportunity exists to say the right things and get the right prominence in these two papers. The DFA is popular among the black and coloured working class in the ANC's heartland (Kimberley and surrounding areas).

During elections, adverts in the DFA are reasonably cheap and should be larger and more frequent than in 2011 or previous elections. Motsosa Kgang is a bilingual publication (English and seTswana) that is funded by Media Diversity and Development Agency (MDDA) assistance. The paper hits the ANC hard in its editorials and reportage and is popular in the North West border towns. The opposition currently appear to have no presence in this paper.

Media24 also runs a number of knock and drops in the district. While they don't carry political news, they may carry community outreach work that opposition parties are engaged in. Community radio is less important in this district due to the wider range of options available to people in Kimberley (5fm, Metro, Ofm and the full complement of SABC stations for the language groups residing in the district). The local station in Kimberley, Teemaneng, is diluted in terms of reach because of this.

Pixley ka Seme – Besides the De Aar Echo, which is a community paper circulating in the district capitol of De Aar and surrounding areas, there are very few print options in this central Karoo district. The Volksblad is just about the only game in town, but this pricey broadsheet is popular amongst white farmers and not the bulk of the electorate. A new community paper, Ghaap, is circulated in the eastern portion of the district and does carry political news. Presence should be maintained in this paper on relevant regional issues.

SABC stations are the only available radio options (RSG and Umhlobo Wenene are the two popular ones). The DA does decently in terms of earned and paid media on these stations due to the party's national profile, while COPE suffers due to the inverse of its provincial structures being stronger than other levels in the party's hierarchy. Although it is out of regional communication people's hands to really drive performance on these stations, more could always be done nationally to ramp up coverage. A new community station in De Aar, Umlazi fm, should be monitored for its potential value.

Siyanda – The capitol, Upington, is the furthest point west where the Volksblad is circulated, save for Kakamas. Talking issues that are relevant to the city in this paper is essential. Die Burger is also circulated here. It is unclear whether the paper's Western Cape outlook could be complemented by Northern Cape opposition-related advocacy given its fairly sizable cross-border circulation. This option should be investigated.

The local community paper, Die Gemsbok, has its offices in the city and a distinct focus on Upington community news. It is, however, circulated as far south as Calvinia and as far north as Windhoek. The paper is popular but unfortunately has a policy of not carrying political

news. Paid coverage during elections is essential and a constant hassle to get opposition community outreach news into the paper during peacetime is important.

The local community station for Upington and surrounding areas, Radio Riverside, is popular and competes only with RSG in this part of the country. Regular opportunities to participate in political debates and talkshows are available. The station also carries Northern Cape news on its bulletins. Both options need to be exploited and paid coverage with targeted messages for Upington taken more seriously during elections.

Namakwa – There are three community newsletters masquerading as newspapers in this district. Despite being printed on folded A3 pages, they are wildly popular, widely distributed and very open to publishing long press releases verbatim and in full. Currently opposition parties are not targeting their message properly for these useful publications or local radio stations, choosing to splay press releases to all provincial media regardless of its relevance to a particular district in this vast province.

Namakwa is also home to the most powerful community radio station in the province and possibly the country – NFM 98.1. The station competes only with RSG, broadcasts to most of the district and there are occasional options to get coverage on news bulletins and debates, especially since an opposition coalition governs the municipality where the studios are based.

Besides this, paid media coverage through the municipality is possible in order to communicate on service delivery issues. Advertising is also ridiculously cheap and good bang for the buck. In Calvinia there is another community station, Kaboesna, that broadcasts to the town and its surrounds that can be exploited in a similar way.

An important potential strategy to be considered for the Namakwa district is to exploit the geographical proximity to the Western Cape. This is a strategy that could be used by the DA, which governed in the Western Cape at the time of writing. More attention to this sister

district of the Western Cape could be given in the economic development strategies of the DA government.

Spill-over benefits for Namakwa in terms of tourism and other economic plans could be articulated in the local media.

*John Taole Gaetsewe* – Besides a couple of Media 24 knock and drops, the Volksblad, Motsosa Kgang and the local community paper, the Kathu Gazette, are also circulated in this district on the North West border. The Kathu Gazette carries political news and community outreach stuff and should be taken seriously in terms of targeted messages as it is circulated directly to all the mines in the area.

The SABC station, Motsweding, is popular amongst seTswana speakers and regional ad-splits options can be exploited during elections to reach voters with targeted messages in their language. Community radio comes in the form of VaalTar fm, based in a nearby North West town. The station is newly launched and unfamiliar at this stage.

#### **6.5.7 Governance record in the three coalition councils**

The opposition coalition governments need to perform well in the three Northern Cape councils under their control for two reasons. Firstly, so that the opposition have something to sell to the electorate in 2014 that resonates more closer to home than the DA's performance in the Western Cape. The provinces are similar, but different, and this should be kept in mind.

Secondly, delivery that is felt in these three municipalities is likely to bleed the ANC's support base dry even further than what was accomplished in 2011. Given that all three councils are in Namakwa, the district could be delivered overwhelmingly to opposition

parties in the 2014 National and Provincial Elections if the hard work of governance is done properly now.

#### **6.5.8 Taking advantage of factionalism**

Besides politics and grants, people have very few options for eking out a living in the desolate Northern Cape. So when the ANC splits here it really splits. The fallout is that entire branches can cross the floor and change the political situation in small towns and hamlets in instant and surprising ways.

For example, COPE almost won Nonzwakazi (an ANC-dominated township in De Aar comprising a ward in the Emthanjeni local council, a place where the party had exhibited almost no prior support) in the 2011 elections through capitalizing on a local split in the ANC and allowing a disgruntled former member to run on their ticket (Jeje, 2011).

The strength of COPE in the wake of the ANC's provincial split after the Moshaweng and Polokwane conferences is further testament to this factor in a general sense. The opposition should be wise to the politics of the ANC and actively seek to capitalize on local political fallouts.

#### **6.6 IN CONCLUSION**

Most of the research for this study was conducted while in a role of both participant and observer which came with both benefits and limitations. The key benefit was the generous access to aspects of the party that an independent observer would not have been afforded. This understanding of the capacity of the party enhanced the ability to set campaign objectives that realistically took into account its strengths and weaknesses.

Natural limitations that came with being a participant-observer was the potential influence on perceptions of the external environment due to partial investment in the cause of COPE in the Northern Cape, as well as the need to balance time for research with obligations toward the campaign.

Nevertheless, this form of research will remain relevant and useful for future studies in the field of South African electoral campaigns as many of the people best placed to do this research are likely to be in the employ of political parties.

As mentioned in the introduction to this study, an effort has not yet been made by South African academics and political professionals to build a corpus of literature on communication as it relates to political and electoral campaigning in the country. Given the importance of the profession to a competitive democracy, more work is needed towards the development of the field for the benefit of public participation in elections and the profession of political campaign management.

This study focused on campaigning in the Northern Cape province in particular. For campaigns to be successfully waged there in decades to come, professional campaign planning and management will be required. To achieve this, a number of research avenues will need to be explored in future studies.

Continued work on voting district analyses is important to ensure an ongoing monitoring of shifts in party support on a micro-scale in order to develop targeting strategies as the basis for future campaigns.

More knowledge of the provincial population, its needs and opinions, is also necessary. The themes on which the various local campaigns should be run must be identified by research into what concerns people on a micro scale. For the rural towns, villages and surrounding farms this can be done on a centre by centre basis.

But for more densely populated centres such as Upington and Kimberley, important townships with large electorates like Pabalelo and Galeshewe would need to be considered on a block by block basis to ascertain what the needs and aspirations are of people, many of

them migrants, based on what standard of living they have currently and what they expect from a party in government.

Besides a geographic-based approach to acquiring knowledge of the electorate, enquiry should also be made into the various demographic groups residing in the province in order to understand them on a similar basis and to creatively define the population in new ways by identifying fresh groupings for targeting purposes.

Consistent polling of the electorate's opinions would enable parties to test and refine campaign messages and candidates for political office; attitudes amongst their opponent's base voters; and what positions parties and candidates should take on the burning issues of the day.

A specific sector, which deserves mention here, is the commercial farming network. Helpful knowledge to accumulate would constitute: who owns what farm and where; what issues concern them; what assistance they can provide to campaigns in their locality; how many people they employ; and the migration patterns of workers and whether they are documented, registered voters. Campaigns would benefit financially and politically from a greater knowledge and understanding of this important demographic.

Campaigning would also be aided by research aimed at developing professional systems for campaign organizations. This can extend from operational systems for door-to-door work - a staple technique for rural campaigning - to developing organograms for hierarchies within a campaign organization and the various roles and responsibilities of each.

While not a factor for the 2011 campaign, the use of social media as a communication channel for future campaigns in Kimberley and Upington in particular, may show enough potential to warrant a study as popularity and access to this platform grows amongst urban youth.

Field observations should also be a staple form of intelligence-gathering. Continuous case studies based on the campaign strategies of the three viable contesting parties in the province, whether in by-elections, municipal or provincial elections, would yield valuable

information about the habits of each party including the type of tactics, schedule and quality of campaigns they are likely to roll-out in various localities.

This form of research would, in all probability, also reveal the means to combat the use of state resources for campaigning purposes – a form of patronage put to formidable use currently by the ANC, incumbent party at most levels of government.

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